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NELL MALHERREY.

BY ALICE CARY.

Oh, cruel Nell Malherrey!
She will break my heart, I say,
For her mouth is like a cherry,
And she kisses such a way!

She says she's not deceiving,
But she says it such a way
That I know there's no believing
She will love me for a day.

And all her fond caresses
Seem but sallies light and gay,
For she smiles and shakes her tresses
From her forehead, such a way!

When I am sad, she teases,
And she frowns when I am gay,
For she knows her pouting pleases,
When she does it such a way!

I ask her more in sorrow
Than in hope, to name the day,
And she always says, "to-morrow."
But she says it, such a way!

I call my Nell, "Deceiver,"
But she sighs and whispers, "nay,"
And she knows that I believe her
When she answers such a way!

ALARIC;

OR,

THE TYRANT'S VAULT.

A SICILIAN STORY OF EARLY TIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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AGRIPPA AND IANTHE.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN A STRANGE LAND; AND A STRANGE FATE.

When consciousness returned Alaric found himself upon a soft couch, and as he attempted to move he discovered that he was bound in his place. For a while he had only a shadowy perception of things, either present or past, but gradually his mind arose from the chaotic gloom, and he finally remembered where he had been. At first, in his disturbed imagination, it seemed as though he were at sea, and on his way from Corinth to Sicily. But he remembered that he had made that passage, and that he had reached his destination in safety. He had entered the city of Syracuse, and the tyrant king had seized upon him. Was he now in the royal dungeon? No. He had escaped thence, and found refuge in the Temple of Diana. Was he upon some soft bed prepared by the priests of the Mystic Tie, and undergoing yet the ordeal of his matriculation? No. He had passed all that, and had left the temple by a secret way, and returned with the old hermit to his cave. Now his thoughts became more clear. He remembered the mission of the messenger from the temple; the departure of Artabanus; his loneliness upon the mountain; his descent thereof; his coming upon the sea-shore; his meeting with the king's soldiers, and his battle with them. And here the cloud settled down upon his memory. He knew that he had slain his antagonists, and that he himself had been wounded; and he had a faint recollection of struggling towards the mountain after his work had been done; but whether he had reached the cave, or whether he had fallen by the way, he could not tell.

Again the youth tried to move, and again he perceived that he was bound. He was now able to take some note of things about him, and his first realization next after the restraint upon his limbs was, that he was swayed to and fro with a ceaseless, unequal motion. At first he had thought that this might be the effect of some hallucination consequent upon the injuries he had received; but he now concluded that he was upon the sea; and as his observations extended he had assurance upon this point. He was in a narrow, low apartment, which was excessively filthy and dirty, and the light to which came through an open scuttle overhead, from which descended a rough ladder. It was a compartment of the hold of a ship. The motion was now painfully palpable to him, and he could hear the water as it dashed against the outside. He closed his eyes, and then recalled the circumstances which had but just passed through his mind, for it seemed as though it must be a troubled dream, after all. It was too strange, too fraught with momentous events, too full of marvelous adventure, to meet his reason as being all real. But he could not cast it from him. He assured himself that he was now awake, and all the rest followed as a matter of course.

As soon as his mind was clear upon this point he turned his attention to his present situation. He could discover that he was upon a low cot, or couch, upon which were soft cushions, and that he was bound to it by broad bands of cloth passing over his legs and breast. He felt the pain of the wound under his arm, and he could feel that it had been thickly swathed. There was a dull, sinking sensation about the heart, and a sense of pain in the head and left shoulder, and in the left breast. At length he called for help—he called loudly—and the effort not only cost him much labor but it sent a throbbing pain through his system, and produced feverish heat all over the body. In a little while a man came down the ladder. He was a coarse, rough-looking fellow, clad in a seaman's garb, and wore a short sword suspended by the wide belt that confined his dirty tunic.

"Have you come to your senses?" he asked, as he approached the cot upon which our hero lay.

"Yes," replied Alaric. "And where am I?"

"Can't you guess where you are?"

"I think I am on the sea."

"You've guessed right there, my master. You are on the sea, and in good hands."

"But how came I here? Whither am I going?"

"You came hither because we brought you," replied the man, sitting down upon the floor as he spoke. "We were upon the coast, near Syracuse, and as we walked along we found the dead bodies of four soldiers. We overhauled them until we were satisfied that there was no life in them, and while we were wondering how they had been slain, one of my men discoverd you, my master. You were close by the trees, spread out flat on your face, and at first we thought you, too, were dead; but we saw that blood was trickling from a wound under your left arm, and upon feeling we found that there was warmth about the heart. Some of my fellows proposed that we should leave you, but I thought a live man was better than a dead one, and I had you carried to my boat. Some soldiers gave us chase just as we reached the water's edge, but we escaped them, and got you safely on board the ship. And here you are, not so sound as you might be, but safe from dying on the hot sand."

"You have not told me whither you are carrying me," said Alaric, after a pause of some moments.

"Why—we shall have to carry you wherever we go, I suppose," replied the sailor, evasively.

"But you know where you are going?"

"We may strike the shores of Carthage. We point that way now."

The youth wished to ask many more questions, but the pain had grown more intense in his head, and there was a faintness overcoming him.

"I cannot escape," he murmured; "why have you bound me?"

"Why—bless your soul, how else should we have kept you in your place? You'd roll off every minute if you were left free to go with the motion of the ship. But you feel worse. Does the bandage pain you?"

"I am faint—my head swims," replied Alaric, striving to recover himself.

"That's the result of the labor you've been at to find out where you were. But we'll do the best we can for you. Some of us are used to taking care of wounds."

Thus speaking the man went to the foot of the ladder and called to some one on deck, and shortly a second one of the crew came down. He was clad the same as his companion, and was also armed. The thought flitted through the youth's mind that he was on board one of the pirate vessels of the Carthaginians, of which he had heard so much; but he had become too faint to make further inquiries. He knew that the bandage was taken from his body, and that the straps of cloth were loosened, and that he was raised higher up; and he could hear the two men talk as they came to the wound; but gradually their conversation sounded strangely in his ear—things swam in his vision—his head reeled—and he sank again into insensibility. And now followed long days of pain and anguish—of alternate light and darkness—of seasons of rest and of unrest. Rough men nursed him, and lifted him about—the wind and the tempest howled in his ears, and the huge seas beat over and drenched him. There were moments of lucid thought—then followed strange fantasies and paroxysms. The blood leaped wildly and hotly through his veins for a season, and then followed faintness and cold, as though the avenues of his system were all frozen up. A while he was upon the sea—the wind, and the tempest, and the drenching rain were there—and then he was borne upon the land. Strange voices sounded in his ear, and strange visions flitted before him.

And so passed the days—for how long he could not tell—until reason once more dawned upon him. He awoke, as from a long and terrible dream, and found himself upon a low bed, within a small apartment, with an open window close by his side. The sweet perfume from a thousand flowers and fragrant shrubs was wafted in upon him, and the atmosphere was warm and soft. He raised himself upon his elbow, and gazed out from the window. He could see a broad garden, stretching away to the foot of a gentle hill, filled with vines, and fruit-trees, and flowering shrubs. There were arbors and fountains, and he saw people in the distance, walking, who wore strange garbs. By and by a door of lattice-work was opened, and an old woman entered. She was dark of complexion, as though reared beneath the rays of a scorching sun, and her simple dress of white linen was scant and poor. She stopped when she saw the youth upon his elbow, and a look of satisfaction dwelt upon her face.

"Ha—Alaric is better," she said, with a strange idiom in her speech.

"Am I among friends?" our hero quickly asked.

"You have been cared for," was the reply.

"But you know me."

"Oho—dost wonder at that? Thou hast told of thyself enough, methinks, for us to know thee."

"I have been sick."

"And thy tongue has had no guide," added the woman.

"Have I been sick for a long time?"

"For the full passage of a moon. The moon was well nigh waned when they brought thee hither, and another has well nigh followed it."

"And have I lain here all this time?"

"Thou hast."

"And thou hast attended me?"

"I, together with others. But thou surely hast thy reason now," the woman said, moving nearer to the cot and gazing sharply into the invalid's face. "The wildness has left thine eye, and thy lips have assumed the color of the pomegranate."

"I have my senses perfectly," returned Alaric, sinking back upon his pillow; for he was weak, and the effort he had made had fatigued him. "And now wilt thou tell me where I am?"

The woman hesitated, and finally answered by asking,—

"Hast thou spoken the truth in thy ravings, when thou said'st thou had'st been a child of misfortune, though not by birth of humble station?"

"I have been most unfortunate, as my present position amply proves," said Alaric, "but as to my birth—I was born as others are born. Where did I say I was born?"

"In many places. Once, in Corinth; once, in Sicily; and then you said, in Athens."

"Then never mind my birth-place, for it cannot matter to any human being now. Tell me where I am."

"Wert thou ever in Carthage?"

"No."

"Then know that thou art in Carthage now, and close upon the coast."

"In the great city?"

"No. The great city is some leagues distant. Thou art to the east of there, upon the shore which faces the rising sun. But I will answer no more questions now, for thou art very weak, and already thou showest fatigue. My name is Numa."

"And art thou mistress here?"

"Me!" echoed the woman in surprise. "Good spirits, no. I am but a servant here. My master is called Torus, the vine-grower. To him belongs the place. Thou wert brought hither by a ship, and my master took thee out of pity—so he said."

The woman soon went away, and shortly afterwards a man entered, bearing a box in his hand. He proved to be a physician, and when Alaric sought to question him he only shook his head and stroked his beard with a mysterious air, and bade him remain quiet if he would live.

"Thou wert as one in the grave when I first saw thee," he said, "and thy life was gone; but by my power I returned it unto thee. Let not thine own indiscretion sink thee a second time."

The youth quickly saw that there was nothing to be gained from this man of information, so he quietly submitted to his manipulations, which were of a highly mystical character. But the patient cared not how much magic the man performed over him, so long as his drugs were potent, and his prescriptions of diet healthful and invigorating.

Six days passed away from the time of the return of Alaric's reason, and he had gained rapidly. He was able now to sit up, and, by the help of a staff, he could walk some. He had been out into the garden once, and from thence he could look off upon the distant sea. He found, also, that the house of Torus was an extensive one, and that there were many out-buildings, some of which were constructed in the highest perfection of art. The domain was situated in a deep valley, and as far as his eye could reach he saw the grape-vines creeping over the trellices and hedges, and up into the trees, and upon the buildings. He saw many men at work—some of the Ethiop skin, and others of fairer face. It was all beautiful, but it could afford him no pleasure. Aside from the memories of the past which afforded him so much food for mental pain, there were causes for alarm in the present. Of late he had questioned Numa more closely, and she had refused to answer him without even a pretext for such refusal. He had strange thoughts of the character of his present position, and the old woman seemed to comprehend the drift of his suspicions, for she shook her head most emphatically, and told him that he must not ask her such questions.

At length Alaric was strong enough to walk as he pleased, and the physician said he was well. He sat in the little room where his bed was, engaged in his own thoughts, when he heard a step by his side, and upon looking up he beheld a man who had been pointed out to him by Numa as Torus. He was a middle-aged man, with a dark face, and long beard of a jetty blackness, and clothed in apparel of rare fabric and workmanship. In frame he was large and powerful, and, in feature, stern and commanding.

"So thou hast recovered, it seems.

Thus spoke the wealthy vine-grower as he stood and gazed upon the youth. There was no sympathy in his tone—no friendliness—no such tone as Alaric had expected from the man under whose roof he had been so carefully nursed and attended; but he spoke rather with a chilling voice, and sternly.

"I am well nigh recovered, kind sir," replied our hero, thinking that the man's manner of speech might be peculiar to him; "and I trust that I may at some time have the opportunity to prove my gratitude. I think I speak to the owner of this domain."

"You do."

"And wilt thou tell me, good sir, how I came here, and why?"

"Thou wert brought by a ship; and you were left here because I made a bargain with the captain to that effect. He found thee dying. He carried thee on board his ship, and nursed thee until he delivered thee here. My physician said he could cure thee, and so I took thee."

These last words struck with a painful, whelming force upon the soul of the youth.

"And, if I could not have been cured, thou would'st not have taken me," he said hoarsely and tremulously.

"Of course not. Why should I? I want no dead men in my vineyard."

"And I am——"

"My bondman! I bought thee of the captain."

The vision had not been false! With a deep groan Alaric sank down, and buried his face in his hands. He was a bondman in a strange land, with no home and no kindred, and the will of a master was to be his law.

"Oh!" he cried, in his utter agony of spirit, "why did not the spear-head reach my heart! And was it for this that I braved so many dangers!"

The vine-grower made no reply, but went out, leaving his bondman still bowed down with the great agony that had come upon him, trusting, no doubt, that time would heal the wounded spirit as it had the wounded flesh.

CHAPTER XIV.

AGRIPPA.

Ianthe had no need to stretch her imagination much in order to bring to mind cause for greatest alarm. In fact, every circumstance, past and present, contributed to enhance her fears, and let her thoughts dwell where they would, only phantoms of threatening aspect arose before her. If she called up the days of her childhood, there hung over them the deep vail of mystery which she could not penetrate, and which seemed to shut the sunlight out even from those times of innocence. If she thought of maturing years she only remembered how she had been guarded, and how even her liberty had been sacrificed to this same mystic vail. If she thought of Alaric, it was only that he might be the prisoner, or the victim of a merciless tyrant. If she thought of Bellerus, whom she still called father, and who was, in truth, a father to her, it was only to remember his parting words, so full of sadness and gloom, and to see again the look of pain that marked his noble face when last he turned from her. If she thought of the king her fears all reached their climax, and imagination stood appalled before the terrible possibilities.

It had been three days since she had seen the monarch—and four days since she had seen her father. During that time not one of her own sex had been present with her, but only the black eunuch had waited upon her. Once she had ventured to ask him how long she was to remain there; but his answer had been evasive, and she had asked him no more. He looked well to her physical comfort, and seemed ever ready to obey her in all things not conflicting with the duties he owed to his master. She had a comfortable suite of apartments, but they were only a prison after all. Beyond their walls she could not move, for bolts, and bars, and stern, stout guards were in her way.

She sat in the outer room of her suite, close by a window over which crept a cluster of flowering vines, and the last rays of the setting sun were lingering amid the foliage. She had just thrown the casement further open, when she heard a footfall behind her, and on turning she beheld the king. A sudden faintness overcame her for the moment, resulting from the quick throbbing of her heart, for she had been thinking of the monarch, and was just trying to drive his image from her mind, when he thus presented himself.

"I hope I find the lady Ianthe well this evening," Pyrrho said, in a smooth tone.

Should she hide her real feelings, and tell a lie, or should she speak as she felt? She might be guarded in her speech, but she would not be false. So thought the maiden as she replied—

"I am far from well in mind, sire."

"There must be seasons when we all have trials of mind, sweet lady," the king responded. "Such is the lot of humanity. But I trust that you have found your outward comfort well cared for."

"I have no cause for complaint on that score, sire, save that I have been deprived of my liberty."

"And even liberty, lady, is but a name. Who has perfect liberty? We all have certain restraints put upon us, which are rendered necessary by the very organization of society. We are all the slaves of necessity, and must bow to the will of nature. The slave does not breathe who has more restraints put upon him than have I. Think not of mere physical liberty while there are so many things to be secured of vastly greater importance."

"I have not seen my father, sire. You said you would conduct me to him."

"You speak of Bellerus?"

"Yes. He is my father."

"Dost really think he is?" asked the king, gazing sharply into her face. He noticed how she hesitated, and how she was confused; but she finally answered—

"He has been my father."

"But thou knowest that he is not thy father by any line of blood?"

"He may not be?"

"But do you not *know*?"

"I know nothing at all about it. If Bellerus is not in reality my father, I only know that he has ever given to me a father's care and a father's love, and he is the only father I ever knew."

"Tell me, lady," pursued Pyrrho, gazing more sharply than before into the maiden's face, "hast thou no knowledge whatever of thy parentage?"

"Not beyond him whom I now call father."

Surely there was no deception in that sweet face. The image of truth was palpable there, and the king seemed so to feel, for he appeared to be satisfied upon a point which, but a moment before, had threatened to worry him.

"I had imagined," he said, "that thou wert an orphan, and as such I had pity on thee."

"Then thou wilt allow me to return to Bellerus?"

"Ah, lady," the monarch replied, with a shake of the head, and assuming a solemn look, "good old Bellerus knows too well what is for thy good to suffer thee to leave this place. Hast thou thought any upon the subject of which I have before spoken to thee?"

"Sire—in mercy, do not think of that again!" cried Ianthe, starting impulsively from her seat, and clasping her hands together.

"Not think of it? Why—I have thought of nothing else since first the idea entered my mind, nor can I think of anything else. Sweet maiden, thou must be mine!"

"No, no, sire! You said you had pity on me."

"And so I have."

"Then, in pity, release me from such a fate."

"Wert thou alone to be considered, lady, I

might do it, but remember, I have pity on myself as well. I have a care for my own heart, and cannot see it crushed. It has been decided as I have said, and thou art to be my queen."

"Oh! sire!—in mercy say not so!"

"I have said it, and the word is gone forth."

"No, no—it cannot—it shall not be! I can never be your queen!"

"Thou dost but waste words, Ianthe. I have spoken it, and no power can swerve me from my course."

"My father! O, my father! Let me see him!"

"Do you still speak of Bellerus?"

"Aye—of him to whom thou saidst I should return."

"Then know that Bellerus is dead!"

"Dead!" shrieked the maiden, starting to her feet. "He is not dead! O—tell me not that!"

"I tell thee he is dead!"

"And thou didst murder him!" Ianthe cried, starting back as though from a poisonour serpent.

"Not so, fair one. I would have saved him if it had lain in my power. My soldiers were sent out in search of the bold youth Alaric, whom I wished much to question. They met him near one of the gates, and Bellerus was with him. The two were commanded to stop, but they refused. Thereupon the soldiers declared their authority, announcing that they acted in the name of the king, and they supposed that the twain would immediately surrender, but they did not so. Both Alaric and Bellerus made opposition, thereby throwing the royal guard back upon their own defense, and in the end they were slain."

"Alaric and Bellerus were slain?"

"Yes—both."

"Both! both!" gasped the stricken girl, shrinking back and covering her face. "O, no!" she added, in a spasmodic tone, starting again to her feet, and stretching forth her hands imploringly to the king, "it cannot be! They are not dead! There is no need that you should deceive me. You have power enough without that. Say that they are not dead!—O! say that they are not!"

"I could not say so and tell the truth, for they are both in the land of shadows. So thou hast no other home but this, and here thou hadst better make thyself contented."

"Contented!" cried Ianthe, supported for the moment by the contempt she felt for the tyrant before her. "Be contented here—in this palace—and with the thought ever present which thou wouldst force upon me! O! thou canst know little of a true heart. If they are dead, their blood is upon thee!"

"Nay, fair lady, thou shouldst not so defame him who is to be thy lord and husband."

"Thou—my husband! O! may death come and claim me, too, ere that consummation is done! I tell thee, king, I will not be thine!"

"Now, sweet one," resumed the monarch, with a devilish look, "thou dost put me upon my authority, and I tell thee plainly thou shalt be what I have promised. And mark you—the time shall not be long. Ere another week has passed, Ianthe shall be my queen! I swear it, by all the gods of Heaven and of earth, and the power exists not that can thwart me in my purpose! Now, maiden, thou canst reflect upon it at thy leisure. I simply give thee the fate that is thine—marked out for thee plainly—and from which thou canst not escape, and thou mayest ponder upon it as thou wilt. Only let me say this: Thy peace and comfort in time to come may depend much upon the disposition which is manifested now. I trust you understand me. Yet, Ianthe, I will be kind to thee, if thou wilt show thyself deserving of my kindness. I wish so to be, if thou wilt only permit it. So do not misunderstand me. The case stands simply thus: Thou MUST BE MY QUEEN! So far it is fixed as firmly as any decree of Jupiter. But beyond that it rests much with thee. I need say no more."

"Thou givest me a fatal favor!" the maiden said, sinking down, and pressing her folded hands upon her bosom. "I ask for life as the only boon worth having, and thou kindly offerest me the choice of means by which I must die. I say to thee now, king, if thou makest me thy wife, thou shalt wed but a lump of clay! So I care not for the joys or sorrows beyond it."

"Thou wilt think better of this when thou art more cool, so I will leave thee to thine own reflections."

With this the king turned and left the apartment, and when Ianthe was alone she leaped to her feet, and raised her hands above her head.

"Never! never!" she solemnly exclaimed. "If my father and Alaric be dead, I will join them ere I will be that man's queen! If I should let my life forth myself, some kind hand would give me sepulture. But he lies to me. If they be dead, he killed them. O—so meant his strange words when he said he would lead me to Bellerus's arms! And my father foresaw it all. When last he spoke to me, in this room, the thought of death was upon him, and 'twas that made him so sad. O! it is all plain now. Did not the tyrant seek Alaric's life in the most cruel manner? Aye—he has murdered them! And shall I be his wife? Shall I place my hand within the one all red with my father's blood! The gods defend me!"

As she ceased speaking, she sank back upon the couch, and rested her brow upon her hands. Her thoughts were wild and confused, and a sense of pain was upon her heart. And even when she could control her thoughts the pain was not lessened. She believed that both her father and Alaric were dead, and she had two good reasons for such belief besides the avowal of the king. First: She knew that, from circumstances which had transpired, Pyrrho must desire to have them removed. And second: She knew that the tyrant never hesitated at any work of blood, if it pleased him to have it done.

And if they were gone, she was indeed without a home! Where were her friends? Upon whom could she call? Alas! there were none! It was with this thought of utter loneliness and helplessness upon her that she allowed her head to sink upon the cushion of her couch, and her groans of despair to break forth. She lay there while the darkness crept over the palace and over the city—she lay there while the eunuch came in with her food, and noticed him not. He left a lamp burning upon the side-board, and went away without disturbing her. It was an hour after this, and she was upon the point of arising to close the casement, for the chill night air was coming in upon her, when she thought she heard her door softly opened. She looked around, and beheld a man of most strange appearance—it was a presence that filled her with both fear and awe.

He was aged, and his hair, of snowy whiteness, hung low upon his shoulders, while his beard, of the same snowy hue, floated far down upon his bosom. His form, which appeared large and of good proportions, was enveloped in a cloak, or mantle, of black, which was secured about the loins by a broad belt of gold. This mantle was wrought with strange characters, upon the breast and upon the hem; and like characters were engraved upon the golden belt. Upon his head he wore a hat such as the maiden had never before seen, its color being black like his robe, and its shape tall and pointed, like a cone. He advanced towards her with a slow step, and put forth his hand, as though he would have her keep silence. She could now see his eyes and his brow, and she thought he had a kind look.

"Let not my presence alarm thee, my child," he spoke, in a low, gentle tone, "for I come to thee upon a message of mercy."

How strange! Had not she seen this man before? Had not that voice sounded upon her ear at some former time? Or was it only a freak of her imagination? But she felt confidence in him at once. Perhaps it was natural that, in her then desolate situation, she should instinctively cling to the first opportunity of hope that presented itself; but the human heart is not apt to reach forth after an unworthy object upon a natural impulse. Those impressions which first strike the mind are most sure to be true ones. So Ianthe felt a strong impression that this man would be trustful and faithful. She thought she saw it in his eye, and heard it in the tone of his voice.

"Has the king seen thee of late?" the visitor asked, as soon as he saw that he had secured the maiden's attention.

"Yes, father. He was here but a short time since."

"Had he any purpose in coming?"

Ianthe hesitated.

"I ask for thine own good, my child."

"O, sir!" the poor girl cried, putting forth her folded hands, "I cannot doubt thee; and yet I would know thy mission,—why thou hast come, and who thou art."

"Ianthe, I have come to serve thee; and if thou wilt trust in me thou shalt have help. Thou askest who I am. Hast ever heard the name—AGRIPPA?"

"AGRIPPA," repeated the maiden, at first thoughtfully, and then starting with sudden emotion as the idea she sought came to her mind. "Art thou the one of whom we have heard?"

"What hast thou heard?"

"We have heard of an Agrippa who is a priest of Diana at Abydos, and who has wondrous powers, far exceeding the powers of men, and little inferior to the gods."

"And have ye ever heard that Agrippa of Abydos was expected here?"

"Yes, father—I have so heard."

"Then wonder not when I tell thee that I am the priest of Diana, and that I am called, Agrippa. I have wondrous powers, as many shall see. I must have exercised them now, or I should not have been here. But be not overawed, nor shrink from me, for, as true as the temple stands, I will help thee. Now tell me the king's purpose."

"He purposes to make me his wife," replied the maiden. She spoke freely, for, with all the awe she naturally felt in the presence of one whose fame was so wondrous, she experienced a degree of confidence which gave her support.

"I thought as much," said Agrippa, taking a seat by the girl's side. "And now," he added, "I wish to know if you have been able to judge why he pursues this course?"

Ianthe thought a few moments, and then answered:

"I cannot judge with any clearness, for he has not been explicit."

"What I wish to arrive at is this: Has he seemed to fear you? Has he shown any sign whereby you would be led to infer that your appearance had surprised him?"

"Aye, most surely have I," replied the maiden, quickly. "On the night when he first beheld my face he appeared like one affrighted; and his minister, whom he called, Donatus, was affected in like manner. And he has gazed upon me most strangely since. He declares that Fate has determined that I should be his queen."

"Now I understand it," returned the priest, with a slight nodding of the head. "But be under no apprehensions. He shall not succeed."

"And can you help me?"

"I can—and will."

"You will take me from this place?"

"Not now. Thou wilt be more safe here for the present. Thou wilt be safest here until Pyrrho seeks to consummate his plan; but that plan shall never be carried out, rest assured."

"Father," said Ianthe, laying her hand upon his arm with a trembling touch, "dost thou know one Bellerus, a mason?"

"I do."

"Dost know where he is now?"

"Why do you ask?"

"The king says he is dead."

The priest did not answer at once. He bowed his head, and for a little while he seemed to be thinking. Then he raised his eyes to the maiden's face, and taking the hand which had rested upon his arm, he said:

"I cannot tell thee where he is. I think the king meant him mortal harm; and I know he has been within the royal power. But pass as lightly over that thought as thou canst."

"Alas! then, he is dead!" And the stricken girl would have fallen to weeping, had not Agrippa quietly added:

"Let thy thoughts rest upon what thou hast gained, and not upon that which thou hast lost. Think of the love which still surrounds thee, and not of the evil. Raise thine eyes to heaven, where Hope beams yet brightly, and not sink them downward, where Despair clanks its festering chains. I tell thee, Ianthe, these are wondrous times, and thou hast an important part to play. Be hopeful of good; be pledged to duty; and trust to Heaven for the future!"

Again the maiden was startled by the strange impression that she conversed with one whom she had before known. A dim echo from the priest's tones lingered among the shadowy recollections of by-gone times; and the light that gleamed from his eyes penetrated to her soul as some other eye-light had done. But these impressions did not prevent her from feeling the force of his words; and so deeply did she feel it, that the current of her heart was stopped, and her hope struggled to rise. But she had another question to ask, and her heart was hushed while she waited for the answer.

"You have heard, perhaps, of a youth, named Alaric."

"I have, my child."

"The king—says he, too, is dead."

"Then the king has lied to thee."

"Ha! and does Alaric still live? Is he alive and well? O! tell me!"

"I will tell thee truly, Ianthe. He fled from the city—he gained the country—I know not where he is now, but we hope he is safe."

"It is enough!" ejaculated the fair girl, clasping her hands in gratitude. "If he is safe, I have yet some hope of joy in the future!"

"And with this hope to comfort thee, and the assurance of safety I have given thee to release thee from fear of the king, I must leave thee; for I have business elsewhere."

"But," cried Ianthe, starting up as the priest arose, "I shall not remain here long?"

"Not many days," replied Agrippa. "But," he added, impressively, "have faith in what I have told thee, and be assured that thou wilt remain here only so long as thine own good and safety are subserved thereby. Let come what will, know that thou hast friends who not only have the will, but the power, to serve thee. I may see thee again, ere long."

With this the priest turned away, and was soon gone. Ianthe had not the power to ask him more, for she was stricken with awe and wonder. As the first startling thrill of rising hope settled to a more calm spirit in her bosom she could reflect upon the strange circumstances connected with this visit. She sat down and tried to think where and when she had seen the man before; but she struggled with her memory in vain. She could dwell upon the palpable impression, as one does upon a by-gone dream, but she could do more. But she would trust him, nevertheless; and, with all the confidence of her soul, she hung upon the promise he had given her.

CHAPTER XV.

THE KING AND THE ORACLE.

The news was not long in spreading through the city that AGRIPPA, the famed Priest of Diana, of Abydos, was within the walls. His name had long been known and revered, and the people had expected his coming with much anxiety, for it was said that he spoke with the tongues of the gods, and could read all coming things. By and by it was reported that the great Agrippa was in the temple, and thither large numbers of the people flocked; and when they saw him, they were filled with awe. His long flowing beard, of silvery whiteness, had a superhuman appearance of itself; and then the strange characters upon his sable robe, and the gleaming of his broad, precious belt; and his deportment of wisdom and authority, all conspired to raise the superstitious wonder of the people to the highest pitch. Many of them pressed forward and consulted him, and he gave them answers which more than surprised them—answers which confirmed them in the faith they had already entertained of his powers.

There was one in Syracuse who heard of Agrippa's coming with more than ordinary emotion. Pyrrho, the king, received the news, and was much moved thereby. There was much of the future which he would know, and he determined to consult this priest, who, it was said, could read the heavens, and translate all the language of the gods. So he called Claudian, his captain, to him, and bade him go and conduct the wonderful man to the palace. In an hour the captain returned, but Agrippa came not with him.

"Where is the priest?" demanded Pyrrho, when he saw that his messenger had returned alone.

"Sire," replied the captain, "he seemed to deem it an indignity that thou should'st have sent for him."

"What—will he not come?"

"He says if you would see him, you must come to the temple."

"By Jove, but he is bold and insolent."

"Ah, sire, he hath a wonderful power."

"How? Hast heard any of his sayings, Claudian?"

"Yes. I heard him speak with several; and he read to them the past of their lives as though from a written book. He knows all things."

"And he can read the future."

"Yes, sire. He reads it as one who speaks from sure knowledge."

"Why will he not come hither?"

"He asked me where the king gave audience. I told him in the palace. Then he bade me tell my master that the Priest of Diana gave audience in Diana's Temple."

"Well—there's reason in it; and I shall seek him. Prepare my retinue, Claudian, and let me know when it is ready."

The captain withdrew, and ere long returned and reported that all was ready. Pyrrho descended to the court of the palace, and having mounted the horse which had been caparisoned for him, he set forth. When he reached the square of the temple, the heralds went forward and prepared a way for him. At the gate he dismounted, and the people fell back as he approached. He found the priest at the altar, and at once addressed him:

"Art thou Agrippa, the priest of Diana of Abydos?"

"I am. And thou art Pyrrho, the king."

"Yes. I have come to consult thee, and I would crave a private audience."

"Such I give to all who ask it," replied Agrippa, stepping down from the marble platform upon which he had stood. "Thou mayest follow me."

The priest led the way to a small apartment in the rear of the temple, to which the light was admitted only through numerous spheres of amethyst. The walls were of a somber hue, and the deeply tinted light, possessing, as it did, all the depth of a shadowy eve, gave a solemn tinge to the scene. The king was evidently moved with awe, for a tremor was perceptible in his frame, and a look of reverence crept across his hardened features as he regarded the venerable astrologer and priest.

"We are now alone," spoke Agrippa, resting his hand upon a pedestal, on the top of which was a small statue of Diana. "Speak to me freely, and thou shalt know all that the gods are willing should be communicated."

"First," said the king, in a tremulous tone, for he could not yet feel perfect power over himself, "I would ask if there be any imminent danger near me."

"Thou shouldst not need to ask that question of me," Agrippa replied, almost sternly. "Danger always surrounds a throne, and it is rendered imminent or distant by the acts of the monarch."

"I know there is danger about me," said the king.

"So do I," added the priest.

"And I think it is imminent," pursued the former.

"I know it is," responded the latter.

"Ha—thou knowest?"

"Yea."

"And knowest thou its character?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"The same as that which has threatened many a usurper before thee."

"How!" cried the king, in anger. "Dost dare to speak thus to me?"

"I must speak truth while I speak; and if thou wouldst hear aught else, thou shouldst have sought some other place than this."

"But there may be words offensive to my ears."

"Not half so offensive as is the thought of the danger thou wouldst avoid," remarked the priest, in a meaning tone.

The king started, and gazed sharply into the old man's face.

"Wert thou ever in Syracuse before?" he asked.

"Yes."

"When?"

"When thou wert a child, and since thou wert a man. But I allowed thee this interview not to answer for myself, but for thee. If thou wouldst know of the things that concern thee, ask."

Again the monarch cast his eyes searchingly upon the priest, and gazed as gazes one who seeks to solve some deep problem; but finally he gave up the thought, and came back to the subject from which he had wandered in anger.

"I ask thee again—what is the danger which threatens me?"

"A head without a body—a body without a head."

"Death, you mean?" whispered Pyrrho.

"Yes."

"And whence comes this danger?"

"From those who have cause to fear you."

"By the heavenly crown, old man, they can be numbered by thousands."

"And thy hope must be in those who love thee!" added Agrippa.

"Ah—men in authority are not apt to be greatly loved," returned Pyrrho, uneasily. "But a truce to this vague language. Thou knowest the danger, and thou knowest whence it cometh?"

"Aye."

"Then tell me where I may look for it."

"It could not benefit thee to know, king, save that it cometh, as thou hast already spoken, from thousands. I can only tell thee how thou mayest surely avoid it."

"Ha!—now thou speakest. Tell me—now."

"Make thy escape as speedily as possible from Sicily!"

"Out upon thee! Wouldst trifle with me?"

"Nay—not so. I do but speak the truth."

"I know better!" cried the king, forgetting himself in his anger. "Thou dost mock me, old man!"

"Pyrrho," spoke the priest, bending upon the monarch a stern, strange look, "thou speakest as thou actest, with wisdom far from thy thoughts. But there is danger enough to threaten thee already without my punishing thee for thy impious speech. Yet I will open to thee more than thou hast asked for: The net is woven about thee, and the bird which thou hast thought might peck the meshes away cannot help thee."

"Ha!" exclaimed the monarch, with a quick start. "What meanest thou?"

"I see," pursued Agrippa, bowing his head, and pressing his right hand upon his brow, "a fairer star than thine. It arises in thy heaven, and crosses thy course; but in no way can they conjoin. The two must remain separate for ever!"

The king forgot his anger in a moment, and gazed upon the speaker with intense eagerness.

"Cannot conjoin," he muttered. "What is this star that follows mine, and will cross its course?"

"It is now swerved from its true course, as though it would meet and mingle with thine own; but it cannot be."

"Speak more plainly, I pray thee!" cried the eager monarch. "What of the star? Whose is it?"

"I should say it was a maiden, young and fair; and she is one whom the gods will protect."

"And does her star of destiny course on towards a throne?" asked Pyrrho, in a low, eager whisper.

"Why askest thou that?"

"Because I would know."

"It has a most wondrous course," said the priest, again bowing his head, and speaking as though from revelations that were being gradually made to him.

"What is it?—Whither does it lead her?" And as the king asked this, still in a half-hushed whisper, he worked his way nearer to the astrologer.

"'Tis a throne!" said the old man, slowly lifting his head, and gazing into Pyrrho's face.

"And shall she never be mine?—never come to me with her destiny?" the monarch asked, now wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement.

"It cannot be," the priest said, emphatically. "The heavens do not lie."

"Never."

"Never. Wouldst ask more?"

"Not now—not now," replied the king, speaking huskily and hastily. "I have heard enough." And as he spoke he turned towards the door, which he opened himself.

With quick, long strides the monarch hurried through the great court of the temple, and when he reached his horse he leaped into the saddle at a single bound. He spoke not a word to his attendants, but rode direct to his palace, and sought his private closet; and having summoned a page, he sent for his chamberlain. He paced to and fro like a chafed beast while he was alone, and when his minister came he stopped, and gazed fixedly upon him.

"Donatus," he finally said, in hurried tones, "whom should I trust if I could not trust thee?"

"Not one in all the world, sire," answered the chamberlain. He seemed a little uneasy at the king's strange look, but he spoke freely.

"I wish I could see thy heart, Donatus."

"Here, sire, is my sword," readily replied the favorite, at the same time drawing his weapon, and extending the hilt to his master, "and here is my naked bosom. If there can be a wish in thy soul to prove me further than thou hast already done, see how calmly I will give thee my very life in the proof."

"No, no,—put up thy sword. I will not doubt thee. It were foolish in me to do so. But there be not many whom I can trust."

"I think thy chief officers are all faithful, sire; and even the soldiers are ready to serve thee."

"Aye—but how if my power over them were to weaken? If they saw me falling, and thought they alone could save me, how many would put forth their hands for my salvation? Aye—how many! how many! Ah, Donatus, but few! but few! But I will not fall! I will seize upon the fate while it is in my hands! I have seen the Priest of Diana—the great Agrippa of Abydos—and he has read what he thinks is my fate. He told me of Ianthe!"

"Ha! Did he?"

"Not by name, Donatus—not by name; but he told me of her so plainly that a child could not have mistaken the sign. He said there was a star—a fair and lovely one—that arose after mine, and would cross my path; but he said it could never conjoin with mine. He said 'twas the star of a maiden, young and fair; and when I asked him if her star of destiny pointed towards a throne, he said, it did. Then I asked him if her destiny could never be united with my own, and he said, nay. I asked him again—and he told me, never!"

"This is wondrous," said the chamberlain. "But dost think he read the stars aright?"

"I dare not question his power to read," replied the king; "but," he added, with a furious stamp of the foot, "I dare to question the power of the stars themselves, to rule and bind me as they will!"

"Hush, sire!" spoke the minister, trembling with superstitious apprehension. "Thou art daring the power of the heavens!"

"I care not what I dare," cried the king, still furiously. "I dare assert my own right as monarch of this realm; and I dare maintain that right even though ten thousand priests of Diana spoke their soothsome edicts against me! And now, by the scepter of Jove, I'll marry the maiden this very day—aye, within this very hour! What thinkest thee of that?"

"Thou wilt do as it pleases thee," replied Donatus, trembling.

"And it pleases me that the maiden's star of destiny shall only meet me in my path, and mingle with mine own. All the powers of heaven and earth shall not thwart me now. The priest told me enough. Ianthe's star points towards a throne, and my danger was, that she would not be mine. But she shall be! I'll raise her to the throne—thus fulfill her destiny, and save myself! Donatus, go thou and call the chief officers of my realm, and bid them attend me in the great throne chamber. Make all hast—let not thy feet rust upon the pavement now."

When the chamberlain was gone, the king sent for the chief of the eunuchs, and the black slave soon made his appearance.

"Mestor," the monarch said, "how is the lady Ianthe?"

"Well, sire; and seemingly more contented."

"Ah—does she mend in her way of sorrow?"

"Aye, greatly, sire."

"Then perhaps the thought of sharing my throne is not so terrible to her, after all. But, Mestor, go and bid her prepare to meet me; and do thou bring her to me in this room within the next half-hour."

"Thou shalt be obeyed, sire."

"Fail not, upon thy life. Conduct her hither, and alone."

When the king was once more alone he stamped his foot triumphantly, and strode forth as one who goes to victory.

"Within the hour," he cried, shaking his clenched hand aloft, "I'll prove that the soothsome priest, and his stars to boot, can be o'ermatched by the Sicilian king!"

[TO BE CONTIEUED IN OUR NEXT.]

WILD ANIMALS ON THE OSAGE.

BY AN OLD STEAMBOAT CAPTAIN.

Let me tell you what different kinds of animals I saw from the deck of my boat, some years ago, on my first trip up the Osage river. I suppose the country is now pretty well settled all round there. It was altogether wild then; only a few Germans settled here and there, out of sight, and many miles apart.

The animals I saw seemed to be perfectly in a state of nature. They acted carelessly and naturally, just as if they felt at home; only when they saw my boat coming up they would look surprised, as if they didn't know what to make of it.

At that time few, if any of them, could ever have seen a civilized man, for so wild and unfrequented was that part of our country, that the United States Government had offered a reward to the first steamboat which should go up the Osage that year; and I was attracted in part by that notice, and gained the prize.

My position and circumstances were very favorable for making observations, my deck being considerably elevated, the day fine, the air clear, the weather pleasant and attractive to the brute creation, and my view unobstructed in all directions. On one side of the river the country was low and level, extending far off in prairies; while on the other was a range of steep, rocky, broken bluffs, much resembling the Palisades of the Hudson, which present a wall, in most parts perpendicular, for miles along the western shore.

My observations commenced very soon after I left the Missouri and began to steer up the Osage. Let me mention the birds, reptiles and beasts in the order in which they came in sight, beginning with those I saw in the water, and afterwards those on land.

First. A splendid flock of swans, of which I had the good luck to kill three or four.

Second. A deer, swimming across the river, with his whole body sunk under water, and only his nose above the surface. Being frightened by the approach of my boat, although he had nearly reached the shore, he turned about and swam back again to the side from which he had started.

Third. Rattlesnakes crossing the river in great numbers.

Fourth. Adders in abundance.

Fifth. Hoop-snakes. These serpents do actually sometimes form themselves into a hoop, by taking their tails into their mouths, and move by rolling over and over on the ground. To do it well, however, they should have a hill to go down, and when it is a steep one, they get along quite finely.

Sixth. Water-snakes. Plenty of these fellows, of all sizes.

Seventh. Jumpers. These snakes will jump a rod at a spring, in a straight line.

The preceding animals I saw in and near the water. On land I observed the following:

Eighth. Bears. One of these I saw on a bluff, standing with his head out of the bushes. He looked at us a few moments, and then walked out upon the grass, turned and struck for his hole, and disappeared.

Ninth. Several varieties of land-snakes, near the shores.

Tenth. Various animals which I could not certainly make out, moving round under some of the old trees which grew on the banks, and bent their branches over into the water.

Eleventh. Deer. A number of these graceful and active creatures, near and distant, lying down, grazing, rambling, or running and leaping, alone, in pairs or small droves, near and distant.

Twelfth. A large animal, which some of the crew thought to be a light-colored bear, and others a catamount. I thought it was the latter, as it seemed to be shaped much like a cat. We had not a very clear view of it.

Thirteenth. A wild-cat. That is a formidable beast, though not very large. It is very active, and sometimes very bold.

Fourteenth. Raccoons in great numbers; one of which fell a victim to a hungry catamount.

Fifteenth. An opossum.

All these I looked on that day as curiosities. I got more familiar with them before I had finished my voyages on the Osage.

VALUE OF INGENUITY AND INDUSTRY.

Both the main and the hair springs of watches are made of steel first drawn into wire. In the former description of spring, the workman gives to the material its wonderful elasticity, by hammering it out upon an anvil; it is then ground, hardened, coiled, and tempered by blueing as we see it. The manufacture of the latter article has frequently been selected as an illustration of the extent to which the value of a material of small intrinsic worth may be raised by the application of industry and ingenuity. "A pound of crude iron costs one cent; it is converted into steel; that steel is made into watch-springs, every one of which is sold for about two dollars and a half, and weighs only the tenth of a grain; after deducting for waste, there are in the pound weight 7000 grains; it therefore affords steel for 70,000 watch-springs, the value of which, at $2.50 each, is one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars!"

DOLORES.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

"They called him dead—they told me he was laid
In yon old forest." SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Where art thou? Which of all the glorious stars
That burn in heaven guides thy spirit's way?
Where art thou, love? The pallid rose of day
Leans her fair face against the twilight bars
Blushing, to hear the lover-winds go by—
As I blushed once—hearing thy footsteps nigh!

Where art thou, red-lipp'd Allan? The sad Eves
By melancholy, shadow-haunted streams
Draw the pale mantle of perpetual dreams
About their solemn brows—as God once drew
His awful shadow o'er thine eyes of blue—
Thy grave is covered with the yellow leaves!

Here kept we tryst in the bright summers gone—
Here the sweet moon and stars their glory rained
Down the still purples, till our thoughts unchained
Sought the dim islands of that sea unknown,
Whose waves of mystic splendor cover thee—
Oh, my Beloved! lost to earth and me!

THE APPLE GATHERING.

A STORY OF OLD TIMES.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

It was in one of the late harvest months of 1855, and I had been spending my summer on a farm in New Hampshire, in company with my cousin Lucia, a laughing, good-natured, curly headed creature, two years my junior, whose very existence seemed one perpetual outbreak of fun. We had scandalized the grave farmer and his wife all through those happy months by hoeing, planting, riding on full and empty hay carts, and nearly cutting each others "understandings" off with the great scythes the workmen hung up on the trees while they went into dinner—they had thought us wild Arabs, I dare say, when they caught us in the very act of smuggling "Deb," the old brown mare, into the pasture, from which we had inveigled her by a dish of oats, long enough for a delicious ride through the "New Road;" and looked grim at our escapades in the house, and at the iniquities of our water spaniel, "Jip," who had a face like a christian, (I dare say he was more than half a one,) and always selected the time of family prayers to perform feats for our benefit that would have made a Chinese owl die with laughing. But after all, the bark of these good people was very much worse than their bite, and they grew reconciled to seeing us noisy and happy, long before we left them.

The busy time was almost over on the farm. The hay was stacked or safe in the great barns—the corn stalks had been cut up—the grain housed, and the land dug over. Nothing remained but the apples to be gathered, and Lucia and I had long had the promise of assisting in this undertaking. We talked about it a week beforehand, and after entering into consultation with the farmer's wife, it was decided that we should combine business with pleasure—invite all the young folks in the neighborhood to assist, and wind up the day with a supper and a dance on the cool greensward of the orchard. I knew, quite well, why I wanted this plan carried out. It was not exactly for the sake of the farmers' lads and lassies from the neighboring hill-sides—I was not a farmer's daughter and I wanted nothing of them. But there happened to be a young gentleman in the neighborhood whom I had known well in the city, and who had danced and flirted with me during all the parties and assemblies of the previous winter without seeming especially fascinated by my charms. He was rich, handsome, and of good family. Now was the time to bait my hook for him—now, when I had him as it were, all to myself, and could hope to secure the prize. So I said carelessly to Lucia—as she sent out the invitations—

"Mind and send one to the hotel for Alfred Clavers, my dear."

She looked up and pouted.

"I am sure we don't want him—the stiff thing! I saw quite enough of him last winter."

"Why, you never met him but once in your life!"

"And that was once too often," she said, with a queer look.

"Well—come he must—we cannot very well get out of that. He has been very civil to me here and elsewhere, and as he is traveling through New England to see all there is to be seen, it would be a pity not to give him a chance to make acquaintance with the natives."

"The natives are much obliged to you," said Lucia, with a disdainful sniff—"and as you happen to be one yourself, the less said about them the better. If he must come, I suppose he must, but I know he will spoil all the fun."

So the invitation was duly forwarded to the hotel, and answered on the appointed day, by the gentleman in person. I introduced him hurriedly to Lucia, who escaped as soon as she could and went to look after her other guests. He looked after her with an expression I did not like.

"I have seen Miss Howard before," he said, musingly. "We met last winter."

Now, though he was too thorough a man of the world to praise one woman to another, I felt uneasy at the way in which his eyes followed her about. And if he had not been very much struck with her in the city, he would never have remembered her in the country, six months afterwards—I knew him too well for that. So I made up my mind to keep him out of her way, and by way of keeping this wise resolution, exerted myself to the utmost to be agreeable and amuse him.

"Heigho!" he sighed, at last, and looked at me with a wicked smile. "Do you remember, *mon ami*, our pleasant evenings of last winter?"

"As if I could ever forget them," I answered, glancing over my fan. I dare say he longed to burst out laughing—only he did not dare—and I might have done the same thing, if I had not been trying to persuade myself that the *penchant* I felt for the good-looking scapegrace, was actually love.

"You flirted shamefully though, with Colonel Lander—and I was ready, at one time, to blow my own brains out, or his—I hardly know which," he remarked.

"It would have served him right."

"Do you mean that you really did not care for him?" he asked, drawing his chair a little nearer my sofa.

"Not one whit."

"Ah—if I could have believed it, I might have——"

He paused, and bending down with an infinite grace, kissed my hand, and looked into my eyes and sighed.

What a pair of simpletons we were—or rather what a simpleton *I* was! His manner actually deceived me for a moment, and perhaps, if we had been left alone he would have talked himself into the idea that he loved me, and I should have been Mrs. Alfred Clavers to-day—as I thank my lucky stars that I am not! But the door flew open just at that interesting moment, as a matter of course, and Lucia flashed in—(she never went into a room like any one else,) and after her, Jip—who sprang up in my lap, and flourished his bushy tail in my eyes, and rubbed his cold nose against my cheek, till I had to leave my seat and go with him to the door, in self-defense.

I think Lucia saw how matters stood, for she laughed heartily.

"We are waiting for you, good people," she said. "Mr. Clavers, I see you are at your accustomed business again. Did you not promise your sister Mary better fashions this spring?"

I stared first at one and then at the other in utter bewilderment.

"Why—do you two know each other?"

Clavers would not speak, but looked both sulky and sheepish, but Lucia seemed to think it fine fun.

"We met in March, wasn't it, Mr. Clavers?—and his sister Mary is a friend of mine—an old school friend—and I know all about him—much more than I wish I did," she added, with a saucy glance at him.

"And yet you never told me—neither of you did!" I cried out.

They had the grace to blush. And then Lucia mended matters by saying—

"He is such a scapegrace—or was—that I was not particularly proud of his acquaintance, and did not choose to proclaim it far and wide. But if you two worthies have finished your sentimental reminiscences, will you have the goodness to join us in the orchard? It is great fun to see you—you who know yourselves to be the two greatest flirts in Christendom. I am not at all afraid of your eloping with each other. You are too much alike, and diamonds do not cut diamonds now-a-days in this world of ours. Will you come now, or is there a sigh or two to be heaved yet? Mr. Clavers, I hope you are not thinking of gathering apples in those light kid gloves."

She called the dog and ran away through the garden, laughing as if her heart would break. Mr. Clavers slowly drew off his gloves and took up his hat. He looked so crestfallen as he went down the yard with me, that I could have laughed too, if I had not been so angry. As it was, I thought it best to stand upon my dignity for a moment or two.

"You and my cousin seem to be two very mysterious creatures," I said coldly. "Pray were you hatching any gunpowder plots at your father's house, that neither of you could mention the simple fact of your having met there?"

He bit his lip angrily.

"You know quite well that all your cousin has said is nothing but nonsense."

"Why didn't you tell me, then, that you had seen her in March? What did you stand so quietly to be introduced to her to-day for? Why did she never mention your name to me? I have been her friend for six months—her intimate friend—and women sometimes talk of such things, when——"

"When they are curling their hair," he broke in with a scornful smile. "I know all about it."

"When, or where, is nothing to you, sir; but they do talk. And yet till to-day I never heard her speak of you. Commend me to a woman for craft and cunning."

"I need not come to you to tell me that," he said, bitterly, and a light broke in upon me.

"Ah, I see. Did she take its playthings away from it, and when it cried for the moon, couldn't it have it?"

"Oh, laugh away. I am not the first man that set his heart upon the moon. Yet for all that she goes on shining, and we may howl and grow frantic if we like it—it is a pretty amusement."

I longed to box his ears, and hers, too. I knew the signs of a heart disease well enough, and saw that whatever she might have done, he loved her still, which was a very encouraging prospect for me.

"I thought as much," I said, sagely.

"I have not a doubt you did; and I dare say, if you had been at hand, you would have helped her, and clapped your hands with joy at the *grande finale*. She made a fool of me, if you must know it, as you have made fools of a score of men I know. I wish there was a law against flirting—I wish you women could be sewed up in sacks, and flung into the river for it."

"And what would be done with the men?"

"Pshaw, they do *not* flirt; at least, if they do, you have not the hearts to feel it as we do!"

"Pretty dears! They have always been noted for their tender, constant hearts, I know."

He broke away from me in a rage when I began to laugh, and took a roundabout way to the orchard, in order to cool his temper a little before he presented himself before his lady love. I mused over the little comedy I had just got a glimpse of, and was lost in admiration at this new insight into the nature of a woman. Here I had believed, for six long months, that I knew every thought of Lucia's little heart. How many more refreshing secrets were there locked up therein? It was a great comfort to me to remember certain Bluebeard's closets in my own mind, into which her hazel eyes had never peeped, and over whose threshold she could never set her foot. And poor Clavers; how he was recompensed for his trifling with me, and many another like me. It was with that serene feeling in the breast that often comes up when we witness another's discomfiture, (angels that we are!) that I went out and joined the apple gatherers on the orchard slope.

It was a pretty scene. The orchard itself was just behind the great barns, and opposite the road and the house. It extended a long way in a straight line, and the trees were planted in regular rows on either side of the field, leaving a wide space, level, green, and like an avenue, to the bottom. There was room enough and to spare for a quadrille, and thirty-two couples were going to "stand up" at the supper, and dance by the light of the moon, and the lanterns which were to be hung from the branches of the trees. This last idea was Lucia's; and she had ordered the music, too—three violins and a French horn.

When I entered, however, the place looked little like a ball-room. Carts drawn by oxen stood here and there along the avenue, and barrels, baskets and pails were under every tree, while a busy, laughing crowd of young people shouldered each other about, and gathered the fruit with the greatest good humor. I joined them, and was pressed into service at once, and made to gather the golden pippins that fell from the branches of a young tree named "Ruth's early," after the daughter of the former owner of the farm. Poor Ruth Way. She had grown up—become a wife and mother—and now the grass was growing over her grave in the village churchyard, and we, whom she had never seen, were jesting and enjoying ourselves as we shook the apples from her favorite tree. After we had cleared the branches we went to others—to Helen's, Winnie's, Laura's and Minnie's russets, to Lucia's summer sweetings, and Jip's (even Jip had a tree named for him) Jip's Baldwin grafts. We worked till the sun was almost down, and not till the last cart was going up towards the barns, laden with the empty baskets, and the poles and ladders, did I stop to look around me. Thus it was—

"Oh, how dusty you are!" and "Your face is stained with sweet apple juice," and "My dress is torn," and "Where is Lucia—where is Lucia?"

Sure enough, where was she? That was a question which must be answered, and I begged the company to proceed to the house under the care of Lucia's cousin and brothers, who would furnish all things requisite for the toilet in the two large front chambers, while I went to call her, if, indeed, they did not find her there before them. They complied after much laughter and joking, and I had the satisfaction of seeing them safely over the bars, and then I remained standing in the middle of the dismantled field, with my dog whirling around me in frantic circles, and barking like an escaped lunatic. I knew well where Lucia was—at least I fancied I had seen her strolling down through the trees to a meadow not far away, where we often sat upon a great rock, and watched the sun go down. I leaned against a tree and sighed. Something—I hardly know what—saddened me beyond measure, and I doubt if I ever saw more clearly than I did at that moment, how poor and paltry a thing our life really is. A song—a tear—a smile—a sigh—and its romance vanishes forever, and then, Heaven help us! Nothing remains after that among "fashionables" but tea and scandal for women, wine and cards for men. It almost seemed to me that the time had come—my time—just then, and I was as weary, and disheartened, and disquieted as I have been many a time since, when I have staked almost my existence upon the prize I sought to win, only to see it fade into the thinnest air just as I thought I had it safely in my grasp.

My dog seeing me look so sober and silent, cut short his dance, and came up to me and licked my hand, standing on his hind feet to do so, and stretching up till the prints of his little toes were distinct in the moistened ground. A dog or a horse are the only friends that try to console you with their whole hearts if you are sad, and I patted his head and went down towards the pasture. A little gate led down into it from the orchard, and Jip wriggled himself through it, and began to hunt in the stone wall for a squirrel he fancied he had seen.

Meanwhile I had my squirrels to hunt out, and found them much sooner than he did his. The Sunset Rock stood midway down the pasture towards the road, and was so large that we were obliged to climb its rough sides to seat ourselves on the top, and so white that we fancied it must be very like that strange figure of salt—that statue of Lot's unlucky wife, which I fully expect to see when I go traveling in the East. On this rock a figure was comfortably seated, with another a little lower. He might as well have been at her feet—for it was Alfred Clavers and my cousin Lucia. When I saw them I knew as well that they would be married as I know it now.

It is hardly worth while to shirk pain in this world—it will come to us in one shape or another, whether we like or not; and I fancy the best way to take it is the way in which boys take floggings at school, with teeth set, hands clenched, and a doleful future consolation for the present sting, in the thought that it must end sometime. I had learned this useful lesson earlier than most women, and I now proceeded to put it in practice. That a little sharp pang of jealousy and disappointment shot through my heart at the sight of the happy couple, I am not going to deny. In the first place, I had fully intended to marry Mr. Travers myself, and had been at no end of trouble to make myself agreeable to him; in the next place, I supposed I had my cousin's entire confidence; and perhaps a mother finding suddenly that her son has taken to sowing "wild oats," and would almost sell himself, body and soul, for some baby-faced girl he has only known a month; perhaps she, I say, stumbling by chance upon one of his love-letters, feels much the same pain that I felt when I saw my great mistake. Such things as these seem to take the ground from under our feet, and we hardly know where we are standing. And thirdly and lastly—since the days of Mother Eve, it has been but natural for one woman to be jealous of another, who eclipses her; and I profess to be no better than the rest of my sex. I walked down behind the Sunset Rock, in no very amiable frame of mind, yet too proud to let my misery be seen. The grass was short and smooth—they did not hear my step, and Jip was far behind me. When I came up to them, Mr. Clavers held Lucia's hand in both his, and she was bending over him as he sat at her feet, and saying:

"I could forgive you all, as far as I am concerned, Alfred. I *do* forgive you. But what I cannot endure is the thought of all you have said to many other women without meaning it——"

"By Heaven, I mean it now."

"Yes, I think—I am sure you do."

She looked at him with her kind eyes, and he kissed her hand. As he had kissed mine in the parlor of the farm-house, some three hours before. I felt a dreary wish that we could all fall from the rock, then and there, break our necks, and make an end of it, and be buried comfortably, side by side, in the old churchyard where we had walked so often.

"But you have much to answer for," Lucia went on. "I hate to think of your flirtations, Alfred. And as for my cousin, sir, I am afraid you have treated her most shamefully."

He laughed carelessly.

"Oh, set your heart at rest, my love. A greater coquette never stepped. I think it was a drawn game between us, and I do not suppose she ever gave me a serious thought in her life. She never will pine away for me or any other man!"

"The most sensible speech you ever made in your life, Mr. Clavers," I said, going up and leaning against the rock. After that speech I was perfectly composed, and could bear to see them together with a steady eye and voice since my secret was so safe.

They started up and peered over the edge of the rock in great confusion.

"Is that you?" asked Lucia, blushing.

"Who else should it be?"

"We—we came down to look at the sunset, and I thought I would show Mr. Clavers our rock," she went on.

"Very well. I hope he likes it."

"Have you been in the field long?"

"Not long enough to hear very much," I said, laughing; "only just long enough to see that there is a pretty good understanding between you, and to hear Mr. Clavers make a very flattering speech about me, which reminded me of an old proverb I have heard."

"And what is that?"

"He might not like to hear."

"Pshaw! Tell me."

"It is a favorite with you and me: 'People that live in glass houses should never throw stones.' I dare say he has heard it often."

The poor fellow colored up to his eyes, and looked imploringly at me. He had the more reason to do so, for I knew even more about him than Lucia did, and might perhaps have spoiled his wooing, if I had felt so inclined. But it would have done me no good, and would only have made them both wretched; and I held my tongue, and also made up my mind to be very great and magnanimous, on the spot.

"The company have gone to the house," I said. "The apples are gathered; and there is a great inquiry for Lucia."

She started up with a look of contrition.

"Oh, Alfred, I must go. Don't keep me."

She called him Alfred, and put her hand upon his shoulder! I was tempted to knock it off, but controlled myself just in time, and said, quietly—

"Before you go, Mr. Clavers, will you answer one question in a plain, straightforward way, as I shall ask it?"

"Certainly—if I can."

"Oh, I have no doubt you *can* talk frankly if you *will*."

At this malicious speech he winced and colored again, and Lucia looked at me very gravely, and said, in a low tone—

"How can you be so unkind to him."

"Sit down, Lucia; you are a goose. Now, Mr. Clavers, were you talking about marriage to this silly child when I came up?"

"Yes."

"Very well. I take it for granted that you are in earnest this time at least."

"I do not think *she* doubts my word," he said, drawing himself up proudly, and pointing to Lucia.

"She! Oh, she would believe black was white, if you should tell her so; and the reason is that she loves you. All women who allow themselves to fall in love, must expect to turn into fools."

"Take care! it may be your turn some day," said Lucia, archly.

How little they suspected all I was feeling, even then!

"Mine," I answered, carelessly, "mine came long ago—and went—and came again. I could not begin to number the times my heart has been pierced. At present, I am constant to one individual."

"And that is?"

"Myself, my dear. But that has nothing to do with your case. Mr. Clavers I know, Lucia, and I know you thoroughly. You will put off telling each other what you ought to say till it may be too late, and then there will be a fine uproar. Now tell me, as a sober, steady friend of both parties, if you love the child well enough to make her your wife."

"God knows I do!" and he was going off into a rhapsody on the spot, but I stopped him.

"Do you love her well enough to marry her at once?"

"To-night—in an hour, if you like! Are you going to help us off?"

"No. People never elope in these matter-of-fact times. But I give you credit for being in earnest, at least. And you, Lucia—do you think you could be content with him?"

"Oh! you know that well enough," she said, making a shy, fond movement towards him.

"Not I. When young ladies do not choose to give me their secrets I never imagine they have any. But if you are both of one mind upon the subject, I must talk to my uncle about it. You say I can persuade him into anything—I think I will talk him over about this."

"You are an angel!" cried out Lucia, as she threw her arms about my neck and kissed me a score of times. I submitted, but I would have preferred Jip's caresses a thousand times over. There remained only one thing to do or to see, and then I could leave them to themselves.

"If you are really so fond of each other," I said, calmly, "God grant you may soon be happy together. Put your arm around her, Mr. Clavers. I have a strange fancy for seeing you together."

He did so; and as she looked up fondly in his face he bent down and pressed his lips to hers. I had got more than I bargained for, and a jealous pang shot through my heart that nearly drove me wild. I said to them that they were to go up to the house, and report themselves to the assembled company; and if any one asked for me, I was coming home by the New Road, and would be with them before the dancing began.

Then I went down with my dog into the pine woods; and what passed in my heart as I lay with my face upon the cool ground, is only known to my Maker and myself.

MINNIE AND ARIEL.

A MODERN FABLE.

There was a little boat moored in a harbor. It was a rocky harbor, the shore was bleak and uninviting, and the little boat had not much delight in her haven, or much enjoyment in her duties and labors. By-and-by a large skiff, handsomely painted and strongly made, rode into the harbor. The little, humble boat admired the new-comer exceedingly, but never dreamed of speaking to one so bold and grand.

But the stranger was not long in making the acquaintance of "Minnie," for so was the little boat called. And "Ariel" was the name of the stranger.

"You are a sweet little thing," said Ariel, as he neared the half-frightened Minnie.

"A sweet little pet of a thing—but you are too sober and sad. It is not good for you to live alone in this gloomy harbor; come out with me—I will take good care of you."

"Oh! no indeed," returned Minnie. "I cannot go out. This harbor, though gloomy, is safe. I am not used to the open sea."

"Nevertheless come out, dear Minnie, and you shall be happy. Why, you will die shut up in here with none to care for or sympathize with you. You are like a nun—come now, be sensible and away with me."

"I am afraid. I do not want to go. I wish that you would not ask me."

"But it is for your own good. Can't you believe me?"

"I fear that when I am out on the sea you will cast me off, and then what would become of me? for if once I went out with you I should be at your mercy. I could not take care of myself. Besides, I do not think it right to put so much confidence in a stranger."

"Who do you call a stranger? I have been in your company these many days. You know me well. I know and love you, and want to do you good and make you happy. Could you not be happy, darling Minnie, out on the sunny, open sea, with me?"

All this time the beautiful skiff had been dancing gracefully by Minnie's side, and trying, but too successfully, to interest her in him. Minnie certainly thought that there could not be in the wide world a boat so admirable as was the gallant and gentle Ariel.

She could not answer his last question. Lie, she would not, and to confess the *truth* she was not yet prepared.

Ariel saw his advantage, and, being used to such scenes, he knew exactly how to follow it up, and the result was that Minnie went, half scared, half delighted, out of the harbor with Ariel, the pleasant and the gay.

"I wish you would give me your oars, my Minnie," said Ariel, as they moved tranquilly along.

"What shall I do without my oars?" asked Minnie in surprise, and in no hurry to relinquish them.

"You are afraid of, and distrust me yet, Minnie. Why will you do so? If you do not wish to give me pain, you will not show such doubt of me. I do not want your oars if you wish to keep them from me."

"Oh, don't be offended. I am sure I ought to be thankful if I can, by any thing of mine, give you pleasure. Here are my oars.

"But what would become of me were you to forsake me now?" burst forth from Minnie, as a conviction of her helpless condition flashed across her.

"I never *will* forsake you, my darling pet. I shall *forever* be to you *just the same that I am now*. Be of good courage, nothing shall do you harm. Your confidence in me shall cost you nothing. Wind your lines about me. Let us be as near to each other as we can. How sweet you are to me. How beautifully formed you are."

"Oh, no, no," murmured Minnie, abashed, for she knew well that she was *not* beautiful, but only a poor, little, plain boat. Yet her breast swelled at the words of Ariel, and she was thrilled with grateful love, for she thought it *might be* that she did *seem* pleasant to her companion; and she knew that if she really *did* seem so, she must indeed be dear to him, for she knew well that the eyes of love alone could see any charm in *her*."

Thus she felt her sides expand with joyful emotions as she moved silently along by Ariel's side.

"Tell me your thoughts," he said. "Tell me, tell me, why are you so silent? Cast your lines about me, and talk to me, my darling."

But Minnie *could not tell* a tithe of her enchanted thoughts. She, therefore, only sighed as she wound her lines about Ariel.

"Why sigh?" he said, in tender accents, "are you not satisfied?"

"Ariel," said Minnie, in a troubled voice, "these lines that you require me to wind about you are not like the lines of some boats—mere insensate cords of hemp—they are all *alive* and *full of feeling*. Where they cling now they will grow fast, and, oh! Ariel, what you have persuaded me to do now you must not repent, for to undo the work of this day will destroy *me*, and be harm to you also. I must do as you bid me. There is in me no power to resist your will; but *I pray you* do not require of me aught that shall end in woe and misery to me. It was at your option to pass me unnoticed or to woo me to come forth with you; now that you have won me, oh! tell me, *and more*—forgive me that I need to ask—that you love me, and will never push me off or forsake me. What *should* I do upon this great, wide sea?"

"Peace, foolish one. Why will you make yourself so unhappy? I tell you that I mean you well. I love you, and always will. I will stay by you through sunshine and through storm. You may never fear that I shall fail you. I think those Ariels who lure away little, confiding Minnies, only to forsake them on the wide waste of waters, are worthy only of destruction. I have no patience with them. I would rather *die* than hurt the feelings of one who *trusted in me*. Ride gaily o'er the tide, Minnie; cast all fear and doubt to the wind. Be happy and cheerful, and you will make me so, and all will be well."

Minnie could no longer mistrust that frank and *warm hearted (?) friend; and the two went rapidly* out of sight of the land.

For awhile all was pleasure, affection, and mirth between the two. Minnie had now come to see altogether as Ariel had desired. She was devoted to him, and happy in him, reposing in firm faith on his promises.

They were now in the strong gulf stream, and going rapidly—some whither, Minnie did not consider where; all she thought of was the delight of Ariel's company; she believed that no mischief could befall them as long as they were together, and he true to his word.

But now a change came over Ariel—something had frightened him. He would return to the land; and with that intent he threw out his oars and spread his sails; for the wind was against the tide and in the direction of his desires."

"We have gone too far, Minnie; it is all wrong; we must make haste to return."

"Where are my oars?" cried Minnie. But they could not be found. "Oh! do not leave me alone," cried the poor little boat, seeing her companion parting from her side. "You said you would not. Wait, wait for me—or, rather come with me still, for *I* cannot return—I have no oars. Do not leave me. You said you would share my fate; and this dreadful tide, into which you have drawn me, is too strong for me. I cannot bear up against it. *Give me back my oars*, Ariel, or continue to go with me down the tide."

"I did not think that you would ever tempt me to destruction, Minnie; how can you desire me to continue in such danger? But my duty bids me to seek to save myself. You should encourage me in my duty, and should have resolution to enable you to do yours also. Minnie, I am vexed that you should allow yourself to be so soon disheartened and depressed. The more you give way to such gloom the worse it will be for you. As for me, I ought not to remain where I am in temptation. It is best that we should part. This is the least to be regretted of any thing in my intercourse with you. I am sure it will be best for both in the end. Minnie, good-bye."

And the alarmed Ariel, politic and specious, hastened away.

"At least, unbind my lines. Oh! set me free, for you are tearing me plank from plank," shrieked poor Minnie in her agony, but all in vain. Ariel could not, or would not hear. With righteous decision he was plowing his homeward way, and the lines that were fastened about him, strained and cracked, one by one, until poor Minnie was indeed free; but it was only to sink, disjointed and broken, beneath the sea.

Our fable is not a perfect or a skillful one; but it is *plain* to those who have need to read its meaning.

There is a moral to it, which the reader is at liberty to study out—better so than to write it.

And yet *one* moral may be spoken—

All small boats near the shore should keep;
Nor venture where the water's deep.

USEFUL INFORMATION.—Useful information in a simple and enticing form is what we want—and the greater and cheaper that information is, the sooner we shall become an intellectual and a moral people.

CONFIDENCE SOLICITED GENERALLY BETRAYS.—Never trust a person who solicits your confidence, for in nine instances out of ten you will be betrayed.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1858

OUR ONLY TERMS.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail.

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In addition to the above unequalled array of distinguished authors, (nearly all of whom write only for the LEDGER,) we are favored with occasional contributions from scores of other popular writers, as will be seen by reference to our columns from week to week. We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other weekly papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

SCHOOLS AND NEWSPAPERS.

To schools and newspapers civilization owes its crown of intelligence. These are the chief bulwarks of free society; the mightiest secular agencies of Christendom. Indebted to religion, perhaps, for their better spirit and morality, it is not exaggerating to say that religion is deeply indebted for its diffusion to them. Both educators and disseminators, their functions are still measurably different—the school laying the basis of knowledge, and the newspaper spreading knowledge, with unparalleled speed and universality, among men.

It is now four centuries and a year since printing commenced its annals, with the "Codex," and some thousands of years since book-making began, yet it is safe to say that newspapers, within the half-a-century past, have done more for the diffusion of essential knowledge, and to make it the common property and blessing of mankind, than all the ages of books. So, too, though universities date back into the dimness of time, and academies are as old as the "classic groves" of Hellas, modern common schools have transcended them all in universalizing intelligence. Schools and newspapers are the *grandest of new-time institutions, and to show that they are new-time we need but quote what Governor Berkeley, of Virginia, wrote to King Charles, in 1671: "I thank God there are no free schools nor printing-presses here, and I trust there will not be these hundred years, for learning breeds up heresies and sects, and all abominations. God save us from both."*

And it was an hundred years, and more, before free schools or newspapers were at all common in our country, where the hindrances to them have been least. But what a revolution since Berkeley's day—in politics, government, newspapers, and schools. Less than two centuries, and the New World is rid of kings and parliaments, and while every hamlet has its free school—or school open to all—there are near five thousand newspapers published in the land. It is enough to make the ghost of Berkeley wince, and would astonish the shades of Guttemburg and Faust, were they penetrable. Let us be thankful that we live in an age when free schools and newspapers are all around us, as beacons and shields. Let us sustain the schoolmaster and encourage the printer—multiply the schools and the newspapers, and freedom and knowledge and virtue will flourish in the world!

TO YEARLY SUBSCRIBERS.

Yearly subscriptions to the LEDGER are beginning to come in at a rate which astonishes us, notwithstanding the fact that we have had ample experience of that sort of thing. Our old subscriptions seem to have borne abundant fruit. Where one lone mail subscriber took his LEDGER from a post-office, we now receive, in almost every instance, a large addition to our subscription list; and where clubs existed before, still larger clubs have now been formed. This is gratifying. *It shows that the LEDGER is liked—that wherever it once gets a foothold, it will make its way by its own inherent attractive powers.* But we did not intend to make a long paragraph on this topic, but simply wished to caution subscribers to send us their addresses in full, and legibly written. Put down the name of the post-office, county and state in full. Let there be no abbreviations, nor any hasty or illegible scrawls. Make everything unmistakably plain and clear and certain, and then your LEDGERS, so far as you and we are concerned, will be sent to their proper destinations in a proper manner.

A CHEERING SIGN.—The old system of hanging those who deserve to be hanged, is again coming into popular favor. Rascality has become so rampant, and homicide so frequent, that sentimental sympathizers with cut-throats have relieved the public of their doleful strains, and murderers now "dance on airy nothing" without a wail from the throat of any "reformer." This is a cheering sign of the times. Crime must be punished.

[From the New York Commercial Advertiser.]

MOUNT VERNON PAPERS FOR THE NEW YORK LEDGER.—* * *—Such a remarkable instance of liberality and enterprise on the part of Mr. Bonner, and of such continuous self-sacrificing devotion to the noble object of the Mount Vernon Association on the part of Mr. Everett, demands special notice. Many have supposed that the circulation of the New York LEDGER was already so immense that no additional attractions could be of any advantage to it, but Mr. Bonner's ambition as a journalist evidently knows no limit, and he spares no labor or expense to aggrandise his most brilliantly successful paper. We all know with what generous perseverance Mr. Everett has traveled over the country delivering his eloquent and masterly oration on Washington wherever a multitude could be gathered to contribute to the Mount Vernon fund; and it greatly adds to the debt of gratitude due to him from the ladies of the Mount Vernon Association that for the sake of contributing still further aid to their enterprise he has assumed for a whole year the burdensome task of writing for a newspaper.

[We will commence the publication of "The Mount Vernon Papers," by the Hon. Edward Everett, in the issue of the LEDGER dated January 1st, 1859, being the first number for the new year.—ED. LEDGER.]

A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

We are gratified at having it in our power to announce that we have made an arrangement with the HON. EDWARD EVERETT to write for the NEW YORK LEDGER during the ensuing year. The particulars of this arrangement will be found in the annexed correspondence. Mr. EVERETT, as nearly everybody knows, is no less distinguished in literature than in official life. In Europe, as well as in our own country, he is universally conceded to be the greatest of living orators, and one of the most thorough, accomplished and profound scholars and statesmen that the world has ever produced. It is certainly a striking indication of the dawn of a new era in literature to have such a man contribute to the columns of a weekly periodical,—a man who, among the numerous positions of honor and trust that he has occupied, has been President of Harvard College, Governor of Massachusetts, United States Senator, Minister to England, and successor to Daniel Webster in President Fillmore's Cabinet. And why should not the great minds of the world disseminate their thoughts through the newspaper press, and especially through a paper of such unprecedented circulation as the NEW YORK LEDGER—a paper not even a solitary issue of which has at any time during the past eighteen months, embracing the whole period of the panic and the hard times, numbered so low an edition as *three hundred thousand copies*, and the circulation of which is now constantly increasing and permeating the whole country. What other channel or medium of communication can equal this? And when there is such an opportunity to do good by diffusing information and creating a taste for a purer and a higher literature among the million, why should our great men shut themselves up in their closets and refuse to communicate with the people except through the pages of a bound book, inaccessible to millions of our population? We thank EDWARD EVERETT for the noble example he has set them in this respect. The people will thank him for it; and posterity, we believe, will also thank him for thus throwing the weight of his character on the popular side and the side of Right.

A few years ago, when we engaged FANNY FERN to write a tale, for which we paid her one hundred dollars a column, we informed our readers that we should spare neither labor nor expense to make A GREAT AND A GOOD PAPER. How we are fulfilling that promise we leave it for them to judge. Since that time, beside securing and monopolizing the literary services of excellent and popular story-writers like MRS. SOUTHWORTH, MR. COBB and MR. BENNETT, we have added to our list such distinguished contributors as MRS. SIGOURNEY, ALICE CARY, WM. ROSS WALLACE, GEO. D. PRENTICE of the "Louisville Journal," and JOHN G. SAXE; and, in the various departments of the LEDGER, we publish contributions anonymously from the pens of eminent lawyers, clergymen, physicians and Professors in some of our prominent institutions of learning. And, now comes the name of EDWARD EVERETT; and, dear reader, if we do not hereafter add any more such names, it will not be our fault—there is only one EVERETT in the world; and, indeed, the same may be said of several of our other contributors—*they having no equals in their respective lines.*

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MR. BONNER AND GOVERNOR EVERETT.

"LEDGER" OFFICE, NEW YORK, *Sept.* 2*nd*, 1858.

DEAR SIR:—I have a proposition of a somewhat peculiar nature to make to you: For the purchase of the Mount Vernon property you have done more than any other man, or I might say, than all other men. To your eloquent appeal in its behalf is pre-eminently due the credit of the progress already made in that noble work, and the favor with which the subject is universally received by our people from one extremity of the land to the other. The heart of the public has naturally warmed towards you on account of your well-timed and well-directed efforts to rescue the tomb of the Father of our Country from neglect and dilapidation.

Knowing that you have been no less distinguished in literature than in official life, it has occurred to me that it might be as agreeable to you to aid the patriotic and benevolent enterprise which you have undertaken by contributions to the columns of a weekly paper of unprecedented circulation, as by a public address. I have, accordingly, to propose that, if you will furnish to the NEW YORK LEDGER one original article a week, for one year, I will, immediately on receiving your assent to this proposition, place at your disposal, for the benefit of the Mount Vernon Association, my check for the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars.

I am aware, sir, that you are not in the habit of contributing to the columns of any periodical, and that you are fortunately so situated, financially, that no pecuniary reward offered to you for your own personal benefit, would induce you to deviate from your usual course; but your disinterested devotion to, and the deep interest you have taken in, the noble work to which I have referred, leads me to hope that, for the sake of aiding it, you may accept my proposition.

Very respectfully, ROBERT BONNER,
Proprietor of the New York Ledger.

HON. EDWARD EVERETT.

BOSTON, 6 *November*, 1858.

DEAR SIR—Your letter of the 2d of September was placed in my hands on the 14th of that month. In consideration of your check for ten thousand dollars to be placed at my disposal for the benefit of the Mount Vernon Association, on the receipt of my letter accepting the offer, you propose to me to furnish an original article weekly for the "NEW YORK LEDGER" for one year.

This liberal offer has received my thoughtful consideration. I have been and am strongly tempted, on the one hand, to make this noble addition to the Mount Vernon Fund. On the other hand, among other grounds of hesitation, I have been afraid that I could not do justice to your liberality, without giving up more time to the preparation of the articles, than is consistent with other engagements and duties.

You are right in supposing that no pecuniary benefit accruing to myself would induce me to undertake the task; although the "financial situation" to which you allude is far less brilliant than you may have been led to think by exaggerated newspaper reports. I feel, however, that it is my duty not to forego this opportunity of adding so large a sum, at once, to the Mount Vernon fund, and I accept the offer. I will begin to furnish the articles, as soon as the immediate demands upon my time to fulfill some previous engagements, shall cease,—in the course of this month at furthest,—and I will continue them as far as possible weekly, making up at the end of the year for any omission in the regular supply.

They will, I hope, be received by you and the Public with the indulgence usually extended to gratuitous labors in a meritorious cause.

I shall venture to call the articles thus furnished by me "The Mount Vernon Papers," scarcely daring to assume that honored name, which however may perhaps be permitted, as appropriately indicating the object for which they are prepared, and so excusing their imperfections.

I remain, Dear Sir, respectfully yours,
ROBT. BONNER, ESQ. EDWARD EVERETT.

We might, perhaps, be pardoned, if we were to make this the occasion of some self-gratulation; but we choose to take a more general and comprehensive view. We regard this event as a marked and emphatic indication of the progress and position of journalism. Such evidences are not wanting throughout the civilized world.

In this country, under our republican government, no journal can be eminently successful unless it reflect, faithfully, the popular opinions and sentiments of the times. Here, consequently, the improvement in journalism may be correctly regarded as showing an improved mental and moral condition of the nation. And when we contemplate how welcome, thrice welcome to our readers—fast becoming, like the sands of the sea-shore, or the stars of the firmament, countless in number—will be the articles from the pure, chaste, classic pen of EDWARD EVERETT, we rejoice in the conviction that the voice of the people is the voice of Omnipotence, not merely, as in ancient times, because it is strong and powerful, but, also, because it is good and right.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

HOW A GREAT LORD EDUCATED HIS SON.

A CHAPTER FOR BOYS.

Did you ever hear of Lord Chesterfield? I dare say you have, if not, you very likely will, before you are much older. He wrote some letters to a son of his, which have become famous, telling how to eat, and drink, and walk and talk politely; how to dress, how to carve, how to dance, how to write letters; how to enter a room, how to go out of it; how to smile at people whom he disliked; what books to read, what sort of people to visit, and to choose for his friends. Every now and then I used to hear of this book, and hear some person say, in speaking of another person, "He has very fine manners—he is quite Chesterfieldian;" which seemed to mean very great praise. Now I have no boys—more's the pity; but still, I thought, I will read this Lord Chesterfield's book, and see how *he* thinks a boy should be brought up, because I have my own notions on that subject, as well as his lordship, although I have had no occasion to practice them; and I think good manners are by no means to be despised, though they are not at all the most important part of a boy's education.

Well, there was just the mistake *I* think this gentleman made about his son, whom he drilled in these things like a little soldier; it was the outside only that he was most careful about polishing and adorning. It was to get a high place in this short-lived world that he was to make his best bow, wear his hat and coat gracefully, and study Latin, and talk French and Italian. It was to secure the notice of great, and powerful, and fashionable people that he was to cultivate his taste and talents, and improve his person; not to do good, not to benefit in any way his fellow creatures by the great influence all this would give him to do good, but *solely to benefit himself*, and to hear it said that he was a perfect gentleman, which, by the way, would have been untrue, had he done all this and done no more, because no man acting from such selfish motives *can* be a perfect gentleman, though to careless eyes he may appear so. Then this Lord Chesterfield told his son never to get angry with anybody, not because anger was wrong, and debased the soul of him who indulged it, but because it was not good policy to make an enemy even of the meanest person, who might some day be able either to help or to injure one. Then he advised him to speak very respectfully of God and religious things, because it was considered "respectable" to do so, and because it gave a man influence, not because it is base and ungrateful to receive all the good things God showers down upon us at every moment, while we little Lilliputions are, practically at least, denying His very existence, and doing all we can to blot and deface and mar His image in our souls, and helping others to do the same, not because He who loves and pities us so tenderly waits month after month, year after year, with patience unspeakable, to see us turn to Him with a loving, penitent "Our Father;" not for this, but because it was "respectable" to be religious. It is quite pitiful to read this gentleman's letters to his son, and see, while he appeared to love him so fondly, how entirely he was educating him for this world, with not a thought beyond, for those ages upon ages, which that immortal spirit must travel through in joy or pain, just as he prepared for it here. It is pitiful that he never said one word to the boy about using his talents and influence for lightening the burdens which were so heavily weighing down his less favored fellow mortals, but everything was to begin and end in himself; that *he* was to shine in public and private; that *he* was to be admired, not for his goodness of heart, but, like the peacock, for his fine plumage—like the bird, for his sweet voice.

Well, the boy was to travel and see the world, and everything in it worth seeing, but by no means to associate with any but "fashionable people," as if he *could* see all that was "worth seeing" in such an artificial atmosphere; as if fashionable people were "the world;" as if God's purest, and brightest and best, did not shine out like diamonds from dirt-heaps; as if *that* was the way to read human nature, which the boy was told to study so perfectly that he could play upon the chords of human feeling and human passion, as does a skillful musician upon his favorite instrument. No; as well might he judge of a book by looking at its gilt binding. He was to talk to women, who, his father told him, "were only grown up children." I wonder had he a mother? I wonder had she whispered a prayer over his cradle? I wonder had she never gone without sleep and rest, that his little head might be pillowed softly? I always ask these questions when men speak disrespectfully of women; well, he was to talk to women, and be good friends with, and flatter them, because, foolish and silly as they were, they had, after all, influence in the world, and might "make or mar his fortune;" there, you see it is again *the everlasting I*, at the top and bottom of everything.

Now you will naturally inquire how this paragon turned out, when he became a man; whether this boy, educated with so much care, and at so much expense, repaid it all;—you will naturally suppose, that with such advantages of education and society, he overtopped all his fellows. His father's ambition was to see him in Parliament, which answers in England, you know, to our American Congress—except that there is no head breaking allowed in that honorable body. Our hero had now grown to man's stature; he wore a coat any tailor might be proud of; made a bow equal to a dancing master; and could tell fibs so politely that even his father was delighted. So far, so good. Now he was to put the crown on it all, by making his first speech in Parliament; he who had the Dictionary at his tongue's end, and the rules of etiquette at his finger ends; who had been drilled in rhetoric, and oratory, and diplomacy, and in all the steps considered necessary by his father to make a great public man. Well—he got up—and stuttered—and stammered—and hemmed—and ha-ha-d—and made a most disgraceful failure. Do you suppose he would have done it had his whole soul been on fire with some grand, God-like project for helping his fellow creatures? *Never!* But his whole thoughts were centered in himself; what sort of figure he cut—what impression he should make; what this—that—and the other great person was thinking of him. Of course he came down like a collapsed balloon, as all men do, who have no higher standard than the approbation of human beings.

Oh, I tell you what it is, you may cram a man's *head* as full as you please; if you neglect his *heart*, he will be after all like a Dead Sea apple—and yield you only—*ashes*. FANNY FERN.

OUR NEXT NUMBER will appear in new type, cast expressly for the LEDGER.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his *former*, as well as his present address.

"WHOM THE GODS LOVE DIE YOUNG."

BY MARY FORREST.

The man of white hairs is a child again. He weareth the old look of innocence, and steppeth with the old incertitude. His voice is fine and small, and his soul looketh out with the old touching appeal. But there is no rose-tint upon his cheek; the fire burneth low in his eye; he hath fallen from the old lines of comeliness; he is bent with many storms, chilled with many frosts, covered with the scars of many battles. We lead him very tenderly to the brink of the River: it is meet and right that he should go to his rest.

The middle-aged man standeth in the midst of the battle—strong in his meridian fullness, sufficient in his self-hood. His face is worldly wise, and covereth the child-soul like a mask. From the hights of his manhood the Past seemeth puerile—the Future a mystery, which his invincible thought will in good time grapple. To such an one Death cometh like an earthquake. His solid rock of Now is rent in twain; his omnipotent humanity is swallowed up. We say of him, "he is cut off in the midst of his days."

We cling to the young. They step with fine, elastic grace, and we catch the airy movement while we walk with them. Their joyous laugh beguileth our own into joyousness. They have a trick of smiling that lighteth the whole house and heart, and we are sorrowful to unlearn it. Their eyes are untainted wells, in which we love to trace out quaint reflections. Their faces are mirrors of their souls, and do not deceive us. Their hearts are warm and generous—scrolls only half written: we may write noble words thereon, with a hope of finding them again. Oh, the young, whom the gods love, are fair and royal! It is goodly to meet and companion with them here, but it is goodlier (alas! for the "I cannot touch them" of our humanity) to see them go forth, in the plenitude of hope and beauty, into the Unseen. The vail has just fallen upon one of these, whose last whisper was the expression of her life:

"SO HAPPY."

Her smile made sunshine in the darkest place,
And her soft eyes hung heavy with the dew
Of human kindness. Life had been to her
One long June morning, whose unclouded skies—
So blue and clear—seemed only a thin vail
To shut out Heaven.

"*So happy!*" Day by day
She whispered it; and, day by day, beloved
And loving, rich in all the grace and state
Of beauteous womanhood, drank the red wine
Of gladness, till her being's beaker brimmed;
And when the angels came and laid thereon
A fair, sweet blossom from immortal bowers,
The "golden bowl" ran o'er—broke with the gift
The gods sent—the dear lips repeating still,
"So happy!"

They are gone—mother and child,
Gone where the heart can drink its fill of joy,
And, greatening with the influx, still find room.
With the immortal bud upon her breast,
Our lovely one went softly out the door
Left open, and sits now, divinely calm,
An angel-mother, nursing her fair flower
In its own garden. But the door is shut.
We reach out wildly, and we only clasp
Our own hands in the mist; we peer
Into the darkness, but our mortal eyes
Are weak and blind with tears. All night we lie
And listen for one strain—one zephyred sigh
Of the old music; and all night we hear
Our hearts beat, and the wailing winds go by.
A pillar of gray cloud is in the house,
And every way we turn it goes before:
Our hearts have shrined it. Oh, poor human heart!
Poor, lonely, sobbing heart! when wilt thou learn
That death is life—the larger, grander life—
And say its august messenger "all hail"?
When shall we lay the beautiful away,
Like weary children, for the balm of sleep—
Whispering a God-speed to the Better Land—
Girding ourselves to follow?

God is good;
And out of his pavilion hear him say—
"I will not leave thee comfortless."

THANKSGIVING.

Of all the good institutions of our Puritan forefathers, none is more appropriate and gracious than the annual Thanksgiving. The spirit of it is not more reverential toward the bountiful Creator, than it is kindly in its influence upon man. By every rule of gratitude, we are individually bound to perpetual thanksgiving to God; but if we all performed this duty never so well, it would be still a noble spectacle to see the community and State periodically uniting in praise to the Common Father and benefactor. It would be yet more grand and affecting if the whole nation would, on the same day, offer up its annual ascriptions. This has been widely desired and urged, and will, we trust, ere long be the rule.

Thanksgiving, as observed at first, was a more solemn and religious holy-day than at present, but we doubt if the more festive and cheerful character of which it now partakes, has detracted from its social or moral influence. What more hallowing and beautiful, than its gathering of kindred and friends around the home hearths and altars? Its lightest gaieties are tempered with religious sentiment, and the spirit of brotherhood and good-will is widely refreshed by its inspirations. New England, where it originated, still hails it most earnestly, but it is not unwelcome in any portion of the Union.

And it is fit that Thanksgiving should come with the close of harvest season, for man beholds then the fruit of his labors, and the bounty of the Providence which has crowned them. With his bins and garners filled, the farmer may well pause in the midst of his ample store and thank the "Giver of every good and perfect gift." For the blessings of the year just past, we have as a people eminent cause to be thankful. We have been preserved from war, pestilence and famine, and plenty and prosperity have covered the land. To the Great Author of these mercies be all praise.

WOMAN'S WAGES.

Whatever may be our opinion of some of the rights, claimed by a class of peripatetic females of the day, we are satisfied that woman has some needs, which have not been adequately considered by society.

Many of the lighter and more tasteful occupations now monopolized by man, might as well be shared by woman, and would often, we doubt not, acquire grace and profit by being given entirely into her hands. We hardly need instance them, they are so numerous—running like viny traceries through all the branches of labor. She certainly might become here what she is allowed to be in France, the sales-woman of lighter merchandize, the accountant of the shop and ware-house, the copyist of the lawyer, &c.

And we not only ask for her a wider range of occupation, but we think she should have larger remuneration for her labor. Her wages should be relative to man's; not by a rule of sex, but according to quantity and quality. Why, in the name of justice, should a man for the same labor receive more reward than a woman? Will any social economist answer us that question? Why, as teacher, clerk, book-keeper, or doer of whatever work, is she to be put off with half-pay? Is it solely because she is a woman?

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

A PERSON who has profound knowledge, without the ability to communicate it, may be compared to a fine chronometer which has no hands to its dial; both the person and the chronometer are constantly right, without correcting any that are wrong, and may be carried around the world without assisting one individual, either in making a discovery or in taking an observation.

"KNOW THYSELF" is a precept which, we are informed, descended from Heaven. The same authority has not been bold enough to affirm that it has yet reached the earth; and, from all that we can observe, we might be pardoned for suspecting that the celestial maxim is still on its journey.

INTELLECTUAL greatness is not necessarily, or even as a general rule, associated with physical greatness. History gives innumerable instances of giant intellects, but the intellectual fame of a giant in person remains to be recorded. Take courage, therefore, ye dwarfs and scarecrows in physical stature.

A BOSTON artist has made a handsome drawing of a cork-tree for one of the pictorial newspapers. Perhaps he is the first artist that has drawn an entire cork-tree, but we know many a one that has probably drawn more corks than an entire tree would make.

THOSE who, at the commencement of their career, meet with less applause than they deserve, not unfrequently gain more than they deserve at the end of it; though having grounds at first to fear that they were born to be starved, they often live long enough to die of a surfeit.

SELF-LOVE, in a well-regulated breast, is as the steward of the household, superintending the expenditure, and seeing that benevolence herself should be prudential in order to be permanent—providing that the reservoir which feeds should also be fed.

To say that all new things are bad is to say that old things were bad in their commencement, for the most ancient were once new; and whatever is now most firmly established was once innovation—Christianity itself not excepted.

WE are often told that the modern Jews are proofs of the truth of Christianity. We think they are, at the same time, wherever they are persecuted, proofs of the want of Christianity in those who profess it.

IT is believed that five thousand persons in the United States live by selling quack medicines, and that ten times that number die annually by buying and swallowing them.

OUR friends, the country and village editors, have a great deal to say about their industry. We might suppose from their boasting that each one of them has as much work in him as his weight in blue pills.

A MINNESOTA paper says that wolves are abundant in that territory. Broadcloth must be in demand there if their wolves, like a good many of ours, are in the habit of wearing sheep's clothing.

LET the wheels of a rail-road train run over your dimes and quarters and halves, and there will be *an expanded currency*; let them pass over a ten-dollar gold piece, and you will have *a spread eagle*.

PLAIN men think handsome women want passion, and plain women think young men want politeness; dull writers think all readers devoid of taste, and dull readers think witty writers devoid of brilliancy.

IT is certainly true that "one swallow does not make a summer," but with some persons half a dozen swallows, when the liquor is good, are a very *sanitary* thing indeed.

So great is the ambition, in those obtaining an education, to build domes before laying foundations, that many a goodly superstructure has leaned like the tower of Pisa.

CONTEMPORARIES appreciate the man rather than the merit; posterity will regard the merit rather than the man.

LIFE may be merry as well as useful. Every person that owns a mouth has always a good opening for a laugh.

No improvement, that takes place in either of the sexes, can possibly be confined to itself; each is a universal mirror to the other.

ALL the women of the villages on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico are in the habit of swimming. The young ladies are all diving-belles.

IF an old man can see nothing to admire or love in the present days, it is not because the days have become worse, but because *he* has.

THE freest possible scope should be given to all the opinions, discussions, and investigations of the learned; like steam, they are dangerous only when pent in.

IT may be a question not easy to decide whether an individual, entitled to no sort of respect, has a right to respect himself.

"THE newspapers of your party are perfect nuisances," said a politician to his opponent. "That's just what horse-thieves think of sheriffs," replied the other.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A PRIVATE letter from Vienna states that the body of the Saxon Princess Margaret, (recently deceased,) wife of the Archduke Charles, was laid upon a block and chopped in pieces, in order to send different parts of the body to various sections of the country. The chopping-up process took place in the Chapel of the Castle, in the presence of the dead woman's husband. Verily, these European magnates are as heartless as grizzly bears.

THE correspondent of the London Times in India says that British rule cannot be made acceptable to the natives until gentlemen and men of humane feelings are sent thither as officers; and that it is a common thing for the young army officers, when riding through a crowded bazaar, to use the butt end of their whips upon the foreheads of the natives just to clear the way.

THE sheriff advertises that he will on a certain specified day sell, on an execution, all the real and personal property belonging to the city and county of New York. That will be a great sale; but we imagine that those who attend it in the expectation of buying the city and county property, will themselves be "sold" and probably "knocked down" into the bargain.

THE poet Lamartine says, in a recent published letter, that unless France responds to his appeal—that is, pays his debts—within three months, he shall quit his native soil forever, that he may not die upon it. That would be a good thing for France. We hope the shameless, spendthrift beggar will not come to the United States.

AN Iowa paper says that a lady near Burlington, in that State, on marrying the man of her choice recently, found herself to be sister-in-law to her father, aunt to her brothers, sister to her uncle, daughter to her grandfather, and great aunt to her own children. That must be a terrible family to marry into.

HUGH MALWIN, a pedlar, was murdered by a negro, in Kansas, a short time since, and the goods in his pack sold for a gallon of rum, wherewith the murderer committed beastly suicide. He drank all the rum in about two hours, and died in an hour from the time he swallowed the last draught.

A NOTED scientific farmer of New Jersey has sold twelve thousand eight hundred dollars' worth of produce from his garden this season, and yet his "practical" neighbors, who can hardly get a living off their places, laugh at his "visionary nonsense."

A BARBER near Leeds, England, not long since engaged to shave seventy men in sixty minutes, he to be assisted by three latherers and five razor-strappers; and he did his work four minutes inside of the specified time.

A JURY in Buffalo (N. Y.) recently gave a Miss Hammondsmith a verdict for $1,000 against a young man of that city, as a compensation for his failure to keep a marriage promise made to the young lady.

A BOY in Augusta, Me., a short time ago, fell off a pile of boards some sixteen feet high, and has not been able to speak a word since; otherwise he does not seem to have been injured.

A MAN named Andrew Shannon, living in Jefferson county, Ohio, was recently bitten by a rat, and died a few days afterwards from the effects of the wound.

A DOG was recently confined in a house in Pittsfield, Mass., for twenty-four days without food, and came out alive and well, but lean and hungry.

A FEW days since a man in Williamsburg gave his little child a glass of gin, which occasioned its death in a few hours.

THE Supreme Court of Tennessee has decided that the use of even one profane oath in public is an indictable offense.

THE YOUNG MOTHER AND BABE.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

While o'er the cradle of thy babe,
When sleep his blue eye seals,
The prayer to Him who gave the boon
In silent fervor steals,
And other boasted pleasures fall
Like dry leaves from the tree,
Remember, mother, sweet and fair,
Such was my love for thee.

And when his small, adventurous feet,
First unto thee shall glide,
And his young lisping lip prefer
Thy smile to all beside,
A payment for thy many cares
That rapturous thrill shall be,
And, gentle mother, sweet and fair,
Such was my joy in thee.

Now, as advancing shadows stretch
Across life's western vale,
And the lone heart 'mid gathering graves
Doth in its courage fail,
Or sadly counts how few the props
That firm and stable prove,
Forget not thou, thine early warmth
Of sacred, filial love.

For though, perchance, the new-found joys
Eclipse its ancient claim,
As fades the taper's ray beneath
The glowing noontide flame,
Still, may the *old* love and the *new*,
With one intent conspire
To train and tune thy listening soul
For Heaven's immortal choir.

RICHARD HOFFMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER CIV.

FIDDLER DICK'S LAST TRUMP.

For several nights Mr. Meadows and his assistants had been constant lodgers at the house of Bet, but without effecting the object of their visit—the capture of her husband.

The worthy detective began to fear lest his prey should escape him, and expressed as much to the convict's wife.

"Yer don't know Dick," replied the woman, "as I does: he is on the scent, *I can feel* it; if he aint found out the crib yet, he soon will; he'd beat the fox for cunning, and, for the matter o' that, yourself into the bargin. Yer may smile," she added, "but I tell yer that he would."

"To-night, then, we will return again."

The above conversation took place on the morning of the fourth day, after the departure of the lodgers, when only Bet and Nora remained in the house. As the speaker quitted the kitchen, the former threw one of her shoes after him, for luck, as she expressed it.

Some of our readers may smile at this and think it puerile, but the throwing of the shoe is a very ancient custom, and still practiced in many rural districts, especially in Yorkshire, where the ceremony of throwing the shoe after the bride for good luck is called trashing. The shoe in connection with marriage may be traced to a period anterior to Christianity. In Deut. xxv., the ceremony of a widow rejecting her husband's brother in marriage is loosing his shoe from off his foot; and in Ruth we read, that it was the custom in Israel concerning changing that a man plucked off his shoe, and delivered it to his neighbor. Hence Mr. Thrupp, in "Notes and Queries," suggests that the throwing a shoe after the bride was originally a symbol of renunciation of all authority over her by her father or guardian, and the receipt of it by the bridegroom, even if accidental, an omen that the authority was transferred to him.

There is little doubt but the writer is correct in his surmise as to the original intention of the act, although now only regarded as a sign of good luck. *Query, by a wretched old bachelor, who has been smoking a cigar with us*—Has the origin of the custom been lost sight of in consequence of the bride *no longer* recognizing the authority of her husband?

Horrible wretch!

That same night a motley group was collected in the lodging-house in the Mint, where Poverty held carnival. Once within its walls, the desolate widow threw aside her cap and weeds; the pious father of five small children, whose white pinafores were carefully taken off that they might be kept clean for the next day, forgot his affectionate solicitude, and sent them with a crust hungry to bed. The fellow was an artist in his way, and knew that a good meal would rob their cheek of its paleness, their eyes of the imploring, anxious look, which, like the aforesaid pinafores, formed a part of his stock-in-trade. The cockney sailor—whose experience of the ocean extended probably no further than the sea of Battersea—shifted the model of the ship he had been wrecked in from his head, where he had borne it all day, and began counting his gains. If large, the precociously intelligent little urchin who, in his peregrinations, rode upon his shoulders back to back, shared in his supper. If not, the dear little tar, who was *honely hanxious* to fight the battles of Hingland, was sent supperless to bed. Not that the child was ever deprived of a proper allowance of food, for it was part of the old rascal's make up that the boy should look well and chubby, especially as he did the pale, haggard, and interesting himself—or, rather, gin did it for him.

Vendors of small wares, whose industry was an excuse for thieving, area sneaks, fortune-tellers, with here and there some unlucky child of misfortune not yet fully initiated into the life he had been driven to, others who could scarcely recollect a different one, made up the groups at the tables which filled the kitchen, whose stifling atmosphere, redolent of beer, tobacco, and gin, proved almost too much for the well-disciplined nerves of Mr. Meadows and his assistants; who, after partaking of a very frugal supper, *which they brought with them*, retired—as was supposed—to rest, in the small room they occupied by themselves, at the end of the passage, whose window opened into the back yard.

No sooner had her customers retired to rest, and the strong bolt upon the door which cut of all communication between the upper and lower part of the house, been securely drawn, than Bet tapped at the entrance of the chamber in the passage.

Instead of three bricklayers out of employ, the characters they had assumed, the policemen in uniform made their appearance. They were active, determined-looking men, perfectly alive to the danger of the service they were upon. The third, who wore plain clothes, was the master-mind that directed them, the ex-inspector, Mr. Meadows.

"You may sleep," he said, "securely; we shall watch till morning."

"But I can't sleep," replied the woman, who was in a state of maudlin sentimentality, produced by the united influence of her feelings and gin; "arter all, you know he is my husband."

The detective smiled.

"Who, if he had his will, would very soon be a widower," he observed; "no doubt but he would contrive to get a very comfortable living out of your establishment. It pays well, Mrs. Fiddler Dick."

"Pretty well for that," answered the mistress of the house, tartly.

"And with such a home he might soon get another wife to assist him to manage it."

Bet's touch of sentiment vanished.

"Good night," said Mr. Meadows. "Should you hear any noise in the passage, remain still until we call you."

To insure his directions being obeyed, the speaker drew a cleverly-contrived screw from his pocket, and as Bet disappeared, attached it to the door between the passage and the kitchen.

That done he extinguished the light, and with his two companions patiently disposed himself to watch till morning, or the arrival of Fiddler Dick.

The situation of the three watchers was anything but an agreeable one. Stationed like statues, afraid to move or speak, in that cold, dark passage, whose walls, reeking with damp, sent forth an unwholesome chill, highly suggestive of rheumatism. One of the men had placed himself close to the shutter of the window, his companion by the door, both ready to pounce upon their prey in the event of his making his appearance, which as the hours dragged on they began to despair. As for their chief, no amount of disappointment could weary his patience; he must not only have possessed a talent, but a positive taste for the profession he had devoted himself to.

Virtue they say is its own reward—a melancholy truth, for in this world it rarely receives any other; we say rarely, for the exception occurred in the present instance. Just as they were about to abandon all hope of affecting the capture for that night, a low, hissing noise broke gently on their ears.

The officers were instantly on the alert; they recognized the peculiar sound made by a spring saw as its teeth bite into the iron.

Evidently some one was attempting from the outside of the house to cut through the bolt of the

FIDDLER DICK PLAYS HIS LAST CARD.

shutter. The men scarcely ventured to draw their breath.

Several times during the operation the saw was withdrawn, and there was a pause in the work, at which the experienced Mr. Meadows, however, felt no alarm lest the operator should escape. He knew that it could only be for the purpose of oiling the instrument. He proved right in his calculations; it was speedily introduced again.

As a slight click announced the completion of the operation, he gently drew a pair of handcuffs from his pocket; not stout, vulgar bracelets, such as any detective might carry, but delicately finished instruments of steel, that locked with a spring.

In the field how frequently have we marked the difference between the young and the old sportsman: the first, all impetuosity and eagerness, frequently loses his bird by impatience; the latter waits tranquilly till it is fairly on the wing, takes his aim coolly, and bags his game, without bustle, haste, or exertion, as if the affair were a mere matter of course. Nothing but his Manton misfiring can disappoint him.

Mr. Meadows and his assistants were old sportsmen; they betrayed neither haste, excitement, nor impatience, but remained cool and collected till *their* bird should rise; in other words, it was not till the shutter was pushed open, the sash raised, and Fiddler Dick within the passage, that the two officers pounced upon him. To seize his arms, bring his wrists together, whilst the ex-inspector passed the handcuffs, was the work of an instant.

"That will do," said Mr. Meadows, satisfied by the click of the instrument that his prisoner was secured.

The mountebank was, literally speaking, so taken by surprise, that for several instants the power of utterance was denied him. His first sign of returning self-possession was to give vent to his feelings by an oath: the next, to make a desperate dash at the window to regain his liberty.

The movement was intercepted.

"Quiet, quiet!" said the captor, much in the tone of a groom addressing a restive horse; "it's of no use."

"What is this for?" demanded the ruffian.

"You will know in good time," was the reply.

"A man may break into his *own house*," added the prisoner, "when he aint got no key; there's no law agin that, I suppose."

"Certainly not," answered Mr. Meadows; "the observation shows a nice appreciation of the law."

By this time the speaker had unbarred the door, and admitted Bet and the servant Norah, who had been waiting the event.

The latter brought a light with her.

When husband and wife met there was something truly fiendlike in the expression of both—hate, impotent rage, and a ferocious thirst for revenge in the countenance of the former; a mocking grin of triumph on the features of the latter.

The woman was the first to break silence.

"I don't think yer will come back agin this time, Dick," she exclaimed. "*It's for life now.*"

The prisoner shuddered.

As yet not a word had been said respecting the murder of Andrew Silex or the robbery at the Home Farm, and he began to recover courage.

"I aint done nothink," he observed, "and this house is mine."

Bet set up a hearty laugh—the assertion seemed to tickle her fancy.

"Yourn, is it?" she said; "well, p'r'aps 'tis; pity you won't have much time to enjoy it. A comfortable crib, Dick—wery comfortable."

Mr. Meadows had no wish to prolong the scene; for him the excitement of the chase was over.

"Is this your husband?" he asked.

"That's him."

"I told yer so," said the prisoner; "yer can't do nothink to a man for breaking into his own house."

His wife laughed again—she evidently enjoyed the joke exceedingly.

"Certainly not," replied the officer; "but the same immunity does not extend to breaking into the houses of other persons."

"*Or cuttin' a throat*," added Bet.

The countenance of Fiddler Dick changed fearfully; he felt that it was all up with him, and experienced, by anticipation, no doubt, a certain very unpleasant choking sensation in the throat.

One of the officers held the light, while Mr. Meadows proceeded to search his prisoner. The first article taken from him was a large knife, such as butchers and pig-jobbers use. It was evidently quite new. Bet guessed the purpose for which it had been purchased, and congratulated herself upon her escape. A short pipe, tobacco-pouch, twenty-three sovereigns, and a handful of loose silver, completed the inventory of the pockets.

"Them's mine!" exclaimed the woman, greedily.

"Patience, patience!" replied the detective; "the law will decide."

"Law!" interrupted Bet, indignantly; "aint I as good as his *vidder?*"

"Not yet, my good woman; whatever you soon may be. Come," he said, turning to the wretched prisoner, "where is it?"

"Where's wot?"

"The parchment stolen from the Home Farm."

"Don't know what you mean. I aint got no parchment, and know nothink about the Home Farm—never was at such a place in all my life."

"That's a lie," observed his affectionate wife. "Look at the corners of his mouth; I can allays tell when he's a lyin', by them."

It was not to be supposed that so experienced a person as the ex-inspector of police would remain satisfied with the assertion of his prisoner, especially when the latter had so deep an interest in concealing it; the parchment being the chief evidence to connect him with the crimes of robbery and murder.

Proceeding methodically in his examination, Mr. Meadows first unbuttoned the murderer's waistcoat, and carefully felt the lining. Satisfied that it was not there, he next examined the coat.

"I thought so," he said; "give me a knife."

"There's one, sharp enough for any think," observed Bet, pointing to the one taken from her husband, which a policeman held in his hand.

Despite the struggles of Fiddler Dick, the garment was ripped open, and the long-suppressed codicil to the will drawn forth.

"That does yer, don't it?" demanded his wife, in a triumphant tone.

"And it does you, too," observed Fiddler Dick; "it makes the gal Lilly yer hated, a lady; yer know, as Mike said, she would one day be worth her weight in gold to him. I could a-got five thousand couter for that bit of sheep-skin, at least yer might a-got it for me; that's what I came for—nothink else."

At the words "five thousand pounds," Bet started with astonishment—perhaps the idea struck her that she had acted too precipitately.

"I aint a liar now, am I, Mr. Meadows?" said the speaker.

"Perhaps not," replied the officer, "as far as regards the value of the parchment. As to your intentions towards your wife," he added, pointing to the knife, "she is the best judge of them."

By this time the first gray streaks of morning had penetrated into the narrow, unhealthy court; and the officers, not wishing to encounter the mob of desperate characters living in the vicinity, at once proceeded to remove their prisoner, in a cab, to Union street police-office, where, on their arrival, he was locked up in a cell to await the sitting of the magistrates.

A policeman was placed with him.

"Five thousand couter!" muttered Bet, as the vehicle drove off; "and that gal gets a fortin, and I only a hundred! The cheats! the villains! That Mister Meadows, with his 'ily tongue, is wus than a Jew! Five thousand couter!" she repeated, as if there was a fascination in the number; of which, however, she had not a very clear perception, it being far beyond her power of arithmetic to calculate. All she knew was that it was a great many hundreds—something enormous.

"You forget that big, ugly-lookin' knife," observed the servant.

"So I does, Norah," replied her mistress; "so I does. But Lilly—a fortin! Bad luck to the day I ever split on him!"

About an hour before the arrival of the magistrates, the policeman who had been placed in the cell with Fiddler Dick came running into the hotel where Mr. Meadows had retired to refresh himself after his night's exertions. From the terrified countenance of the man, he guessed what had occurred.

"You have neglected my orders," he said.

"My wife brought me some breakfast," replied the officer, "and I—only——"

"You quitted the cell, like a fool?"

"Yes."

"And the prisoner?"

"Has hanged himself."

The detective hastened to the station, and found the intelligence but too true. No sooner had the wretched mountebank been left alone, than he formed a noose by tying his cravat to one of the bars of the windows, and anticipated by his own rash act the hand of justice.

In the course of the day an inquest was held; a verdict of *felo de se* returned, accompanied by a severe censure on the negligence of the policeman, who was dismissed the force.

As we shall only be anticipating events by a few months, we may as well state here that Bet never recovered the effects of her disappointment; sober or drunk, the wretched woman frequently repeated to herself the words, "Five thousand couter," and she died with them on her lips.

Norah succeeded her as landlady to the lodging-house, as well as to the "yaller *sharl* and *bunnit*." In speaking of her mistress, she declares to this day that Bet was a rale lady.

Mr. Morton was seated in his office, deeply engeged in drawing up a brief for his fair client, when the detective was announced. The astute man of law read in his features that his visitor had important intelligence to communicate.

"Have you succeeded in apprehending the rascal?" he inquired.

"Last night."

"Where is he?"

"Dead," was the laconic reply.

Mr. Morton both felt and looked disappointed.

"It was not my fault," continued the detective, "I directed an officer to remain in the cell with him. It is impossible to find brains for all the force."

"A suicide?" observed the lawyer.

"Yes."

"And the parchment?" demanded the gentleman, eagerly.

Mr. Meadows drew it from his pocket, and placed it in the hands of his employer, who hastily perused it.

"As I suspected!" he exclaimed, in a joyous tone. "In the event of Sir Norman's death without male heirs, the issue of Allan Boothroyd come in for an equal share of the property. As for the ruffian's death, Meadows," he continued, "it is not likely to prove of any great consequence. A public example has been lost, that's all."

The ex-inspector observed that they were becoming rare.

"The rarer the better," observed the lawyer. "You have managed this affair capitally—shown more than tact—positive genius."

Opening his cheque-book, the speaker drew for a sum so liberal, that it astonished even Mr. Meadows.

"Are you satisfied?" demanded Morton.

"Perfectly," said the latter, pocketing the cheque. "I need not say that you may command my services day or night, in any affair you may require them. I am amply paid."

The lawyer once more carefully perused the codicil, which, as a matter of course, it was necessary to prove at once.

"One step more," he said, "only one, and the right of Lillian to half the Meldown estates will be as clear as the sun at noonday."

That step was the discovery of some legal proof of her father's marriage, without which all that had hitherto been done was useless.

CHAPTER CV

GAME TO THE LAST.

In the multitude of counselors we are told there is safety. If legal counselors are meant, we at once demur to the truth of the proverb, and our experience ought to have some weight, seeing how dearly we once paid for it. Lady Boothroyd, however, had not arrived at the same conclusion, a circumstance scarcely to be wondered at, perhaps, considering that it was, as the playbills express it, her ladyship's first appearance in the court of chancery. On being served with a copy of the bill, filed in the name of Lieutenant Marsh, as next of kin, and natural guardian to Lillian, she at once consulted a formidable array of the most eminent members of the bar, and secured as many opinions, as what *rich client* will not, favorable to her case.

It is a little extraordinary that no two lawyers, unless engaged on the same side, ever see the same case in the same light, then their unanimity of opinion is equally remarkable. Far be it from us to hint that this singular divarication arises from any mental obliquity of vision; no doubt it is one of the idiosyncrasies of the legal profession, which the legal mind alone can explain, never intended to be understood by the uninitiated, and what is more, *it never will be.*

On one point the learned gentlemen laid great stress; the plaintiff had not stated in his petition to the court where the marriage of Allan Boothroyd and the mother of his niece had been celebrated; any hitch, discrepancy or doubt in that respect, and the case would be at an end—not a leg to stand upon.

"After all," observed Serjeant Kite, "the residue undisposed of by will appears to have been exceedingly small."

"Under twelve thousand pounds," added Counselor Flaw, referring to the accounts rendered by the executors.

"The residue is not the real object," replied her ladyship, who, as usual, was present at the consultation.

The three gentlemen learned in the law had long since suspected that such was the case. The observation had been intended as a feeler.

"It is an unprincipled attempt," continued the speaker, "to introduce the daughter of a common soldier, Barny Gee—a fellow who, had he lived, would have been tried for poaching on the Meldown estate—into my family, to give her a name and position in society. As the widow of the late Sir Norman," she added, "and the guardian of his only child, I feel bound to resist it."

"Very natural!" "Highly proper!" and "Commendable spirit!" were the ejaculations with which the declaration of their client was received. Still, somehow her advisers did not feel quite satisfied; better judges could not be found, perhaps, of the distinction between the reason and the pretext.

"It is a little to be regretted, Lady Boothroyd," said Mr. Twine, the well-known queen's counsel, in his blandest tone, "that you commenced your operations to guard the honor of your family against a spurious claimant to bear its name *quite so soon;* in fact, before any stir had been made by her abettors. The abduction of the child," he added, "was rather a *strong measure;* and my learned brothers and myself wish to be in a position to explain it to the court, as the very most will doubtless be made of it on the opposite side."

"Nothing can be easier," answered the lady, coolly.

The learned counsel had all along been convinced that such was the case, and were delighted to hear the assertion from her own lips.

"On the very night the father and child arrived in the village," continued the artful woman, "the former was shot in an affray with Sir Norman's keepers; in fact, it was to avoid persecution for a similar offense—he was a determined poacher—that Barny Gee enlisted for a soldier."

"This is important," observed Kite, making a note.

Flaw nodded approvingly.

"The death of the wretched man," resumed her ladyship, "naturally created a certain amount of sympathy amongst the inhabitants of the village, all more or less addicted to the same pursuit, and not sympathy only, but a bitter feeling of hostility against my late husband, who, a few nights afterwards, was shot at in his carriage."

"By whom?"

"That we never could discover. As a wife, I naturally felt anxious and terrified, more especially as one of our keepers had been murdered on the night when the father of this young impostor met his death. It was impossible, after such an outrage, we should remain at Meldown."

Again the notebooks and pens went to work.

The case really began to turn out much better than they imagined. A baronet shot at by a gang of poachers—sure to enlist the feelings of the chancellor, a keen sportsman, on their side; a noble family driven from their home—great scope for eloquence.

"*And the abduction?*" *quietly insinuated Mr.* Twine.

"I am coming to it," said his client. "Womanlike, I naturally pitied the orphan left entirely dependent upon her relatives, an old weaver and his wife, and offered to place her in my school."

"Very generous!"

"Noble! forgiving!"

"My offer, however, was refused," added Lady Boothroyd, without heeding these complimentary ejaculations; "and, seeing that the presence of the child only served to keep up dangerous, irritating feelings, I certainly did cause her to be removed from St. Faith's. I have not the slightest hesitation in making this admission to you, gentlemen; but if you consider it important, can easily prevent my share in the transaction ever being proved in a court of law."

"By what means?" inquired Serjeant Kite.

"By hanging the agent I employed," answered her ladyship, firmly.

The counsel exchanged looks with each other; evidently they began to suspect that their client was no ordinary person.

"I have no wish to do so," continued the speaker; "but, if necessary, I can produce proofs that the man, Mark Rayner, whose name you will find in the plaintiff's bill, is the murderer of my late husband's gamekeeper, Springthorp."

"Proofs!" repeated the three gentlemen learned in the law.

"Irrefragable ones," was the reply.

After this statement, the legal advisers of Lady Boothroyd, who, we need scarcely observe, was the real defendant in the suit, instituted *pro forma* against the executors, came to the conclusion that the ugly affair of the abduction now appeared in quite another light; that it could be explained, or, at the worst, palliated, by the strong influence of feelings which even the law respects, and perhaps got rid of altogether by a little dexterous tact.

Tact! what a sharp, ringing sound the word has; and how useful the thing itself is. There is scarcely a purpose or relation in life to which it may not be applied.

After all, what is tact? In nine cases out of ten, a wedge to *split* a moral difficulty, not solve it; a cloak hiding the threadbare garment beneath—giving the wearer the false credit of being a well-dressed man; a varnish which distracts attention from the mediocrity of the painting; a lie implied, not uttered, and all the more dangerous from bearing specious resemblance to truth.

And yet, how many persons feel proud of possessing this dangerous quality; on the same principle, no doubt, which induces vulgar pretence to trick itself out with pinchbeck, when unable to wear gold.

As Chancery barristers, the eminent counsel consulted by Lady Boothroyd could not possibly undertake the conduct of a criminal case. It would have been against all professional etiquette—*infra dig.;* so they advised her to have recourse to the services of Mr. Gringle. The affair they considered quite in his way—the gentleman being as remarkable for expedients as he was known to be unscrupulous in the employment of them. With his assistance, they doubted not but on the day of hearing, one important witness would be absent. A practical illustration of what is generally understood by tact.

The morning on which the consultation between the widow of Sir Norman and the lawyers took place was the one appointed for the meeting in Kensington gardens, to which spot Lillian and La-

dy Bell, attended by our hero and William Thornton, repaired. There was no occasion to introduce the cousins, each recognized the other by the likeness to herself. Their appearing together in a court of justice must, as the lover of Alice observed, convince the most sceptical of the tie of blood between them.

"It was not my fault, dearest Lillian," observed Alice, "that your home has been amongst strangers—your claims disputed; my heart, from the first moment I heard of your existence, acknowledged them; for I had not forgotten the poor little prisoner in the old pavilion at Meldown Park, or the words she uttered, and have frequently been reproved for asking questions on the subject."

"I am sure it is not," answered our heroine, her eyes filling with tears of pleasure; "but my home for years has been a happy one; so happy," she added, "that a sister's love alone could have increased its felicity."

Lady Bell and our hero were introduced to the heiress. Her ladyship, although prepared by the description she had received, could not avoid expressing her surprise at the singular resemblance between the two girls. Richard, of course, did not feel so much astonished; the portrait at Meldown Park had long since made him familiar with it.

As Alice drew from her pocket the chain and locket, to present to her cousin, she could scarcely avoid smiling at the expression of William Thornton's countenance; it was almost reproachful. Doubtless, he expected her—although she no longer believed it to have been his gift—to wear it till the moment of parting with it. But lovers are such exacting creatures.

This stolen interview proved a happy one for all; not excepting even William, who felt, perhaps, a little disappointed when Lady Bell took his arm—she had already secured that of our hero—an arrangement which enabled the cousins to enjoy undisturbed the few brief hours of intimacy permitted them.

"No doubt you think me very cruel," observed her ladyship; "but, as Hamlet says, 'I must be cruel only to be kind.' It is my earnest wish," she added, speaking in a more serious tone, "that Lillian and Alice should love each other."

"Your precaution is scarcely a necessary one," replied the gentleman, "they cannot fail to love each other, both being as good as they are beautiful."

"Very pretty, and true as pretty, no doubt," answered the kind-hearted woman, with a smile. "Take example from your friend here; see how patiently he bears it."

"And well he may!" exclaimed the lover, with a slight, only a very slight tone of impatience. "Richard is a happy suitor, has no hostile influences to contend against, can see Lillian daily; it would be unreasonable indeed were he to complain. My position is a widely different one. Lady Boothroyd hates me—nay, carried her treachery so far as to intercept the letter in which I declared my passion, and answer it in her daughter's name; who, ignorant, or doubtful of my feelings, yielded to the selfish entreaties of her father on his death-bed, and promised to become the wife of Illston."

Lady Bell looked serious; a promise made to a parent, under such circumstances, in her clear judgment, appeared a binding one; sacred as an oath, it never entered into her imagination that it could be broken.

"I pity you," she observed, "pity you both; but Alice will keep her word."

Poor William began to look very miserable. His fears had suggested the same thing.

"There is but one hope," added the speaker, "if I judge the character of her you love aright—the rejection of her hand by Illston."

"He has already been appealed to."

"By you?"

"By his victim," answered the lover, bitterly.

"Then he is an unmanly, spiritless fellow," exclaimed her ladyship, with womanly scorn of the noble viscount's selfishness; "and were I a——; but, no, no," she added, suddenly checking herself, "it would be wrong, very wrong to counsel that."

Whether the speaker, in her indignation, had been on the point of recommending William Thornton to adopt hostile proceedings against his rival is a problem we confess our inability to solve, further than by observing that such a supposition is by no means improbable when we consider the excitable, high-spirited character of Lady Bell; who, as the wife of a soldier, had naturally adopted some of the opinions and feelings of the circle by which she had been so long surrounded.

Here, for a few minutes, we must digress; promising, however, not to exact too much from the patience of our readers. It is simply to remark that pictures of life, to be faithful ones, must portray its lights and shadows, virtues, vices, weaknesses, and errors; and that it would be unjust to blame the fidelity of the artist.

The author of "Richard Hoffman" is no advocate or even apologist of dueling. He considers it an act religion and reason alike condemn, and which, thank Heaven, in the present age common sense has all but succeeded in rendering ridiculous.

To judge from the glances which the two gentlemen exchanged, they, unfortunately, did not think so.

When the cousins rejoined their friends, it was observed that the eyes of both were suffused with tears. Their adieus were sadly spoken, and the heart of the lover sank within him as Alice silently took his arm; he remembered the words of Lady Bell.

"William," said the unhappy girl, as soon as they had separated from their friends, "I am about to inflict pain; and I cannot tell you how sorrowful the reflection makes me. We must meet no more. Do not censure me, pray do not, before you have heard my reasons. *I dare not break my word to my dead father.* I know all that you would urge. I have urged it to my own heart and reason; but in vain. Grant that my promise was extorted—reluctantly given; still, it was given, and must be kept; unless," she added, bursting into a passionate flood of tears, "the grave should mercifully receive me before Illston can claim its fulfillment."

This was a sad blow to William Thornton, who, for the last few days, had been indulging in visions of a happy future. Disappointment, however, did not render him unjust. The noble resolution of the sorrowing girl to adhere to the promise so solemnly given, increased his admiration of her character, although he tried every means a lover's eloquence could suggest to shake it.

"You may convince my heart," replied Alice, mournfully, "for it is weak, and you possess too powerful an advocate there already, but not my reason, which tells me that happiness would not result from our marriage; the memory of my broken vow would glide like a spectre between us, poisoning our short-lived bliss. You might still continue to love me, but respect, without which love is but a worthless passion, would become extinct. Better die broken-hearted," she added, "than survive the loss of that."

"You wrong yourself and me!" exclaimed her lover, passionately. "What, blame the bird because it has escaped the fowler's snare! censure the innocent lamb for flying from the wolf's embrace! never, never! Your father had no right to extort such a promise from you, to offer you a sacrifice at the shrine of his ambition, to tyrannize over you, even from his grave; the act was monstrous, unnatural, and ——"

"Hush!" said Alice, seriously; "deeply as I regret his conduct, I dare not blame it: *the child must never judge the parent.* And now, William, it is better that we say farewell. It is a sad trial to us both; I feel that I am acting rightly, and the conviction will sustain me to the end. It was selfish of me, very selfish, ever to confess my love; forgive me that, and struggle to forget me."

"Forget you!" repeated the youth; "how easy to advise, how difficult to accomplish."

"Not so," replied his companion; "you have energies, talents, which must not be wasted in idle, useless sorrow. The world has a claim upon them—places distinctions within your reach, such as good men prize; in the achievement of these, in diffusing good around you, the sad past and the poor girl who loved you will be forgotten, and in time, William, you may find another——"

"You drive me mad!" interrupted William Thornton. "You cannot think me the heartless, plastic thing your words describe, and deem that a few short years spent in the pursuit of honors I despise can blot from memory's cell that past whose recollections commence with boyhood's dreams. Shall I tell you," he continued, "when, and when only, your image will be effaced from the shrine in which it has so long been worshiped?—when death shall still the pulses that now beat for you, and the last flickering breath hang trembling upon my lips. Life and my love for Alice Boothroyd will fade together."

Alice could only answer this passionate vindication of the constancy of his affection by her tears.

"But all is not lost," resumed her lover, in a more cheerful tone. "Heaven will not permit the sacrifice your heart can never sanction. I will see Illston. If it is your wealth he covets, my father will cheerfully pay down the value of the Meldown estates to release you from this cruel bondage. Your cousin is needy, as most gamesters are; nay, think not I would degrade myself by slandering my rival! I speak from certain knowledge. The claims of Lillian may possibly affect your fortune. I am not hopeless yet."

The poor girl recollected the words and looks of the viscount when he declared that, were she a beggar, he would still claim her hand, but could not bring herself to dash aside the hopes of her lover by repeating or describing them.

As the speakers were about to quit the gardens they encountered a gentleman with a military air, who evidently recognized the lady; there was nothing, however, sufficiently marked or offensive in the glance he gave to justify its being noticed by her companion, and yet he felt his blood boil at the piece of well-bred impertinence.

"Are you acquainted with that person?" he inquired.

"I have seen him in society," replied Alice; "but for the moment cannot remember where. Yet stay—I recollect, it is Captain Chester; I met him at the last ball at Lord Carlington's."

This incident, trifling in itself, led to more serious results than either of the lovers suspected; who separated after a fond and lingering adieu, yet not without hope, at least in the heart of one of them, that the seemingly insurmountable barrier opposed to their union, might yet fall before the efforts of indomitable will.

The next day Lady Boothroyd was informed by her lawyer, that he had been served with a notice, that plaintiff was about to move the court of chancery to decree probate to a recently discovered codicil to the will, under which her late husband, Sir Norman, had enjoyed the Meldown estates. It can scarcely be said that the intelligence took her by surprise, for she had long since been aware of its disappearance on the night of the murder of the steward at the Home Farm.

Some, even of what is termed the stronger sex, might have felt their courage fail before the increasing mass of evidence daily brought to light, to confound her deep-laid schemes; but not so with the unprincipled woman, who, having but one object in life, clung to it with a tenacity of purpose that would have done honor to a better cause; her energies rose with the difficulties that surrounded her, and, after coolly dismissing Mr. Flint—the affair was too important to be intrusted to a country practitioner like Marshall—she set forth to hold another consultation with the gentlemen of the long robe, and by a caprice which Alice could only explain by the supposition that her meeting with William or her cousin in Kensington Gardens had been betrayed, insisted upon her daughter accompanying her.

For three long hours the tired girl sat listening to suggestion, opinions, and plans, that made her feel sick at heart.

If any of our readers—and who can say what misfortune may overtake the most prudent—should ever be engaged in a chancery suit, we advise them, even though they may have both moral and legal right upon their side, never to take any being, whose esteem they value, with them when they go to consult their lawyers; for if there is any speck in their nature, any littleness of character, vice in heart or mind, they are sure to be brought out. A chancery suit is a severe test to frail humanity.

More than once during the morning Alice had occasion to blush at the duplicity and worldliness of her mother.

Probably Lady Boothroyd felt this; for she certainly appeared in anything but an amiable humor as she stepped into her carriage, where her daughter was already seated.

"Home!" she exclaimed, in a sharp, angry tone to the old domestic, Joseph, as he was about to close the door.

"I beg your pardon, but is your name Boothroyd?" demanded a well-dressed youth, whose incipient moustache, affected lisp, and confident air, gave promise of more than the average amount of puppyism in future years.

Her ladyship replied only by a well-bred stare.

"Alice Boothroyd?" added the speaker, coolly raising his eye-glass to observe, as he afterwards described it to his fellow clerks, the irate mamma. Even vulgarisms have their day, and *parient* has become obsolete.

"My name is Alice," answered the young lady, with difficulty recovering from her surprise; "what would you with me?"

"Only to serve you with this subpœna," said the youth, placing a paper in her hand, "to appear and give evidence in the High Court of Chancery—Boothroyd *versus* Boothroyd."

Alice received it passively.

"Insolent!" exclaimed her mother, angrily; "throw it into the street; pull up the glass. How dare you," she added, turning to the footman, "permit such an impertinence?"

"You may toss it where you please, old lady," observed the clerk, "only remember she is served. We know that you are slippery as an eel, but I have witnesses."

He pointed as he spoke to two respectable-looking men who were standing near, highly amused, no doubt, with the scene.

During their ride home Lady Boothroyd maintained an ominous silence; she was evidently revolving in her mind what circumstances could account for the step the guardians of Lillian had taken. There was but one—Alice must have spoken of the scene in the pavilion.

"Unnatural girl!" she exclaimed, as soon as they entered the dressing-room, "you for whose welfare I am toiling night and day, to turn against me, to betray me."

"It is a sad thing, mother, when the child can betray the parent," was the reply, "for it implies something the conscience fain would hide."

"I am not to be taught the duty I owe to my family and your father's wishes by you," observed the imperious woman. "I insist upon knowing the extent of your folly; tell me everything."

"You have but to ask," answered her daughter, respectfully.

"You have seen this pretended cousin?"

"Yes."

"And informed her of——"

"All that I witnessed in the old pavilion in Meldown Park, mother; restored to her the locket and chain which William Thornton sent to me believing it to be mine."

"Fool! you have risked the loss of half your fortune."

"It has long ceased to be of value to me," replied the heiress, mournfully.

"Romantic stuff! the folly of a love-sick girl," interrupted her ladyship, scornfully. "I have long known that you were weak and childish; now I have discovered that you can be dangerous, and shall take my measures accordingly. Retire to your room," she added, "and do not attempt to quit it without my permission."

From that day Alice Boothroyd was a prisoner.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

WE PART TO MEET NO MORE.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

Farewell—we meet no more as once we met,
Our paths lie far apart—the spell is broken;
The spell which held my spirit in its sway,
Has gently, lingeringly passed away
Now let this one sad word be softly spoken,
"Farewell!"

If in thy sky so bright with hope and joy,
Dark clouds should rise and cast their shadow o'er thee,
May they pass quickly by and leave no trace
Of having sought for an abiding place,
Amongst the sunny rays which now enfold thee;
"Farewell!"

Strong ties are riven—we part—yet memory oft
Will travel back to those bright days of gladness;
When Hope and Trust were guardians of our way,
When Life passed with us like a summer's day,
When all unknown was the cold touch of sadness;
"Farewell!"

"MY NIECE FLORENCE."

A GAME AT CROSS PURPOSES.

"I never will marry her, Harry, and she may as well set her heart at rest upon that subject. I don't wish to deprive her of the fortune, but as neither of us can have it alone or in part unless shared with the other, why, she will have to forego it, as I shall. What a confoundedly stupid will this doting old uncle of mine did make! I wonder if we could not get it set aside on the ground of his insanity or incompetency."

"I don't see that you would be benefitted in doing so. You don't need the fortune, and the world's condemnation would fall upon you for an attempt in which you probably would not succeed."

"Well, I have no thought of attempting it. I simply will not marry the girl, and then the long catalogue of benevolent institutions named in the will can divide the fortune among themselves."

"But how can you decide that you will not marry her? You have never seen her, have you?"

"Never, and do not wish to see her."

"But perhaps she will save you the trouble of declining her hand, by first signifying her own refusal of the advantages attached to the proposed marriage. I think I would have the grace to give the lady an opportunity of first accepting or declining the propositions of the will."

"True, perhaps I ought, and I will wait until the year granted us for reflection and decision draws to a close, to see if she will forestall me in a refusal. But there is no danger of that, Waltham. She, a little country girl, brought up, as I have been told, in narrow circumstances and entire obscurity, will be glad enough to grasp at such a fortune——"

"And such a husband, I suppose you would add, if you dared," said Waltham, laughing, yet looking admiringly upon the handsome face and fine person of his friend Derby. "But tell me if the attractions of some charmer, met in your late travels, have not contributed to the philosophical eagerness with which you are ready to decline a noble fortune? If it be so, surely the lady will have ample evidence of your disinterested attachment to herself."

Derby reddened and turned away. His friend had proposed a home question, and one that he was not quite ready to answer, inasmuch as he had been guarding a secret and silent love in his heart for months—a love that, until it was breathed to its object, he thought far too sacred to be whispered to another.

Waltham regarded his friend for a moment with amazement. His question had been a random one, and it was only by chance that he had elicited the secret so long and successfully hidden. After gazing thus, with astonishment depicted upon his face, he uttered a low, prolonged whistle, indicative of the puzzled condition of his thoughts, and strode from the room.

Derby was left alone to his thoughts. Before him lay the letter of his deceased uncle's attorneys, received a week previous, which informed him of the provisions of the will that made his possession of the large fortune involved dependent upon his marriage with the old man's "niece, Florence, the only daughter of my beloved sister, Caroline," according to the wording of the document, "within one year from the date of my decease; and, in case either party declines such marriage, then the aforesaid bonds, mortgages, real estate, bank and railroad stock, etc., etc., to be equally, share and share, divided among the Institutions, or their trustees, hereinafter named."

The vision of a fair face, framed in floating, chestnut curls, of eyes of deep violet hue, tender and appealing, of a form of fairy lightness and grace, a being clothed in all the attributes of beauty to his eye, rose constantly between him and that hateful document. Not for the wealth of the Indies, not for whole streets of houses, nor for whole fleets of ships, would he yield the chance of winning the fair girl who, three months before, had crossed his pathway only to disappear.

He had met her at Lynn Beach, with her invalid mother. The visitors were few, and thus so dependent upon each other as to mingle in unusual sociability. He had early been introduced to Flora Hastings and her mother, and though he knew nothing of them, except a few most flattering remarks uttered by the departing friend who mingled the introduction with his farewells, he had often thought since that they seemed to be much better informed respecting himself. But he settled the matter in his own mind by the very agreeable supposition that they had heard of him from some friend who had passed a winter in New York, where his social successes had given him a very pleasing notoriety.

Not one word of love had passed between Miss Hastings and himself, though there had been some eloquent glances on his part that called the bright blush he loved to see to the lady's fair cheek, when she was suddenly summoned with her mother to the death-bed of an uncle. So sudden had been their departure, that Derby, who was taking a morning stroll upon the beach, knew nothing of it until they were miles away. Mrs. Hastings had left a note for him, with some books that he had lent to herself and daughter; but though the volumes reached him safely, the note, through the carelessness of the servant to whom it was entrusted, was lost. And Derby was thus left in uncertainty in regard to their wishes for the continuance of the acquaintance, and without the knowledge of their address. Flora Hastings seemed to have vanished utterly from this world, but he was determined to search for, to find her, to lay his heart at her feet.

Perhaps it was his vanity, but he believed that she had manifested more pleasure in his society than in that of any other of the few beaux then sojourning at Lynn Beach. And his heart would throb with strange joy, as he thought of some chance glances, some tender expressions of her beautiful eyes, some thrilling tones in a voice always sweetest of any to his ear. At any rate he had determined to seek her, the world over, to make her his wife if she would consent. Without her, fortune would be valueless, with her he felt that, were the necessity laid upon him, no toil would be deemed a hardship that would provide the means of making her happy. He had a considerable fortune, unimpaired by any youthful excesses; and though he believed her to be poor, he cared not for that, only feeling grateful that, if she chose to accept him, he had the power of placing her in affluence.

But month after month passed away, and Derby was unsuccessful in his search for Miss Hastings. Not once had the ungenerous suspicion crossed his mind that she was not all that he had first supposed her to be, though his friend Waltham, to whom he had at length confided his secret and his perplexity, had once ventured to hint that she, together with her mother, must have had some discreditable reason for concealing from him their place of residence. He would not believe the omission to be accidental, ignored the possibility that the lost note might have supplied the desired knowledge, and, with that harsh judgment of women, too common among men of the world, was ready to attribute their silence to some unworthy motive.

His hint, however, was received by Derby with such a storm of rage, that he had no inclination to repeat it. But he did not lend his aid toward the search with sufficient good will to render it availing. He regarded it as Quixotic, and believed that if a consummation were long enough delayed, Derby would become discouraged and accept the bride and the fortune proffered by his uncle's will.

He calculated upon the proverbial fickleness of his sex. But Derby was made of other stuff than the mere danglers of fashion, male coquettes, and his heart was true to its first devotion.

At length the time approached when, by the terms of his uncle's will, the marriage must be concluded or declined. He felt that, as a gentleman, he owed some attention to the lady named in the words of the testator, "my niece Florence." He resolved to write to her, but here a new difficulty arose. He did not know the lady's surname. It was not mentioned in the copy of the will which had been forwarded to him, nor in any of the letters of the attorneys, Messrs. Pounce and Tape. Nor had he ever, as he could remember, heard the name previous to his uncle's death.

Mr. Derby, the testator, was the half-brother of our friend's father, and younger by some years. His mother had a daughter by a previous marriage, who was the "sister Caroline" mentioned in the will, but as she bore no relation to the father of our young friend, who had seldom seen her in his father's house, he knew little of her, and had scarcely ever named her to his son. And this accounts for Derby's ignorance of her name and residence.

He wrote to Messrs. Pounce and Tape, requesting the young lady's name and address. The reply contained the address but not the name, the attorneys not comprehending his ignorance of so essential a fact. Impatiently he wrote again, and this time the answer was written by a clerk. Messrs. Pounce and Tape were both out of town, for the summer vacation. Another delay; and when the close of the week brought no letter, Derby's feverish impatience had risen to such a hight, that he resolved to proceed at once to the town where his uncle had lived. He knew that the "sister Caroline" did not reside there, but expected to be able to discover her name from some source.

He started accordingly, and as if to fill the climax of this game of cross-purposes, the letter of Mr. Pounce, containing the desired information, passed him on the way.

Arrived, he went at once to the office of the attorneys, and was so fortunate as to find Mr. Tape there, who had been called unexpectedly to town by some pressing business. He stated his business to the smiling attorney, and received for his answer that the ladies, mother and daughter, were in town; that he purposed calling upon them at their hotel as soon as he had dined, and would be happy to accompany and introduce Mr. Derby to them.

"I am very sorry," said Mr. Tape, "that you should have been so annoyed, sir. Of course, we could not suppose you ignorant of the name of the young lady—your cousin. Is she not? Ah," continued the voluble attorney, "only a connexion by marriage! I comprehend. And so you have never seen her! Ah, a very beautiful young lady, is Miss Hastings! I do not hesitate to give my opinion on that point. It can be sustained, sustained, sir. But, what is the matter, Mr. Derby? Are you ill, sir? Here, James, a glass of water. Only the heat, I dare say. I, myself, find it very oppressive. I think I may say, indeed, and it can be proved by statistical evidence, carefully compiled, *proved*, sir, that this is the warmest summer of the last twenty years. But, as I was saying, Miss Hastings is—in fact, I congratulate you, sir, congratulate you in advance of possession, sir, and that I seldom do to any heirs under wills probated from our office."

"'Miss Hastings,' sir! Mr. Tape! Is the young lady's name, Miss Hastings? Do I understand you quite rightly?" ejaculated Derby, who only found his tongue at the close of the lawyer's harangue, for he had been stricken with amazement at mention of the name. Florence Hastings! Could she be the Flora he had known? As he asked himself this question, a dread quenched the joy of his hope, and his heart ceased to beat, while he grew pale with fear.

Mr. Tape was profuse in his offers of service, and pressed Mr. Derby to go home with him and seek some repose, previous to calling upon the ladies. But as Derby's impatience brooked no such delay, it was finally decided that the two gentlemen should dine at a restaurant, and that, as by that time the hour appointed for Mr. Tape's visit to the ladies would have arrived, the two should proceed together to the hotel.

"And while I am talking with the mother, sir," said Mr. Tape, "you will have ample time to become acquainted with Miss Hastings—a beautiful creature, sir, beautiful! Really, if it were not for Mrs. Tape and our six interesting children, I should be inclined to envy you, sir."

"But, perhaps," faltered Derby, whose hopes and fears had risen to agony by this time, "perhaps, the lady may not accept me. I do not wish the fact assumed that I am to be the fortunate possessor of such charms. Remember, the year has nearly passed, and I have not, till now, sought her acquaintance."

"True, sir, true, and I am at a loss to understand the delay. But I should say, sir, and I give my opinion freely, sir, as a man, and not as an attorney, that she will not refuse. I really think so, sir."

And the little man looked upon Derby almost as admiringly as Waltham had done long before, when the same subject was under consideration.

Derby was conscious of a universal tremor, and he could almost hear the throbbing of his heart, as he followed Mr. Tape up the stairs, and along the passage that led to Mrs. Hastings's private parlor at the Hotel. The blood rushed with such violence to the brain as to cause a sensation of vertigo, and for a moment after the door opened he could not see. But then a familiar voice—a woman's voice—pronounced his name in tones of welcome. The mist cleared away, and he found himself standing, face to face, with Mrs. Hastings—the Mrs. Hastings of Lynn Beach—her hand extended to meet his own, and the pleasant, motherly smile he had so loved to see a year before, upon her face.

"Flora will be here soon," she whispered. "You must not wonder that we have been a little surprised that you have not sought us before. A visit would have bound you to nothing. You are always free, except as you and Flora may elect. My child will marry for love, not for fortune." There was a little pride in the tone in which Mrs. Hastings uttered the concluding words, and she turned away as the door opened and Florence, her fair face suffused with blushes, entered the room.

Florence! His Flora! As Derby felt the soft pressure of her little palm he knew that she was his, at last. Oh, to meet again and thus! To read in Flora's eyes, in her timid air, in her gentle tones, the tale he so loved to read! There should come to all lives such crowning moments of joy, such glimpses of that Paradise where all is love!

The lawyer's conference was long, but, for hours after he departed, Paul Derby lingered beside the lady of his love. Explanations were given and received; and were satisfactory, beyond doubt, for, following them, momentous questions were asked and answered, that affected the happiness of two lives, and, though they thought not then of that, secured Mr. Derby's large fortune to the two for whom he had designed it.

But three weeks were wanting of the completion of the year since Mr. Derby's decease, when the two met. The day previous to the first anniversary of that event, Flora Hastings laid aside her mourning garb, and, clad in spotless white, she stood before the altar and uttered the vows that made her Paul Derby's wife.

Waltham was there and bridegroom's man; and he took occasion most maliciously to whisper in Derby's ear:

"I thought you 'would not marry the girl.' 'Poor, obscure little thing,' it must have been her fortune, after all, that tempted you!"

But Derby was too happy to be annoyed even by his friend's sarcasms. He smiled the sublimest forgiveness.

A MAN OF PROBITY.

To a man of probity, nothing is more essential than always to speak truth, and to be strictly observant of his promise. On the other hand, nothing is more infamous and dishonorable than to tell lies and break our word.

During a war between the Romans and Carthaginians, Attilius Regulus, the Roman general, was defeated, and taken prisoner by the Carthaginians. Notwithstanding their victory, they were desirous of making peace with the Romans. In order to obtain it they permitted Regulus to go to Rome, on condition that he pledged his word to return to Carthage—not doubting that, to obtain his liberty, he would persuade the Romans to make peace. But that generous Roman scorned even liberty, when purchased to the detriment of his country. So that, far from persuading the Romans to make peace, he told them they ought to continue the war, for the Carthaginians were not in a situation to support it. After this he prepared to return to Carthage, according to the promise he had made. The Romans, particularly his relations and friends, advised him not to return, because the Carthaginians, who were cruel, would most certainly put him to death. But rather than live with infamy by breaking his word, he preferred going to certain destruction; and returned to Carthage, where they put him to death by throwing him into a tub filled with spikes. Such a death is far preferable to a life purchased by lies and infamy.

A man of probity and honor considers himself as interested in the welfare of all mankind. To such a character it is that Terence, in one of his comedies, attributes the saying, *Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto:* which means, I am a man myself, and, as such, interested in whatever concerns man. Indeed, we are of opinion, that it is impossible to see any one unhappy without feeling for that person, and endeavoring to help him; as, on the other hand, one is pleased to see people contented and happy. None but the most depraved souls can envy other people's happiness, or can rejoice at their misfortunes.

ORIGIN OF BEING OUT ON BAIL.—There were at Rome four different ways of detaining the accused in custody, namely: the common goal; commitment to a military guard; commitment to the care of the consuls, or other magistrates, in their own houses; and lastly, security for the person's appearance, which is what we call *being out upon bail*

ARAB WISDOM.—The Arabs have a saying, It is not good to jest with God, death, or the devil: for the first neither can nor will be mocked; the second mocks all men one time or another; and the third puts an eternal sarcasm on those who are too familiar with him.

MUSIC—A SONG.

BY C. D. STUART.

O, the joy that music brings,
Is no deeper than the pain
Of my heart, that aches to drink
All its rapture in again;

For the memory will not sleep,
When the song is so divine—
It has tasted of the cup,
And is maddened with the wine!

O, 'tis maddened with the joy,
And 'tis maddened with the pain,
And its pulses throb with fire,
In the heart and in the brain.

Give me wine of song divine—
Pour it out like rushing rain—
Let me drink the beaker dry,
Drink and fill, and drink again!

Give me wine of song divine,
O, the joy, the thrill, the pain
Music brings, when beauty sings,
And the spirit drinks the strain!

THE VIEWLESS AVENGER.

One sweet, mild morning in the month of March, 1834, a small family were seated at breakfast in a rude log-cabin, some half-a-dozen miles from the left bank of the Brazos, in the province of Texas. A single glance round the locality showed it to be a recent settlement, for no signs of fields, gardens, or incipient cultivation could be discovered. The island-grove adjacent to the humble dwelling had not yet been shorn of its virgin ornaments, and not even a dim path appeared on the surface of the great green prairie, as smooth and unmarked by the footprints of man as the sublime level of the trackless ocean.

The slighest survey within the house of the emigrants sufficed to prove that they belonged to the poorest class—the exiles of indigence, for whom civilization has no home—without property or privileges, save the servile right to toil for the profit of others—to create the wealth which it is felony to enjoy. The only articles visible in the room consisted of a few stools, the rough clapboard table, some dilapidated plates, a frying-pan, and the hunter's rifle.

But the repast itself furnished the most striking evidence of extreme penury, as the only food on the table was dried venison, without bread or salt. Nevertheless, the partakers of this unpalatable fare looked as if they might once have seen brighter days. The father, a middle-aged man of much physical power, with regular, if not handsome features, presented, to an observing eye, that nameless air of luminous thought and refined intelligence, which nothing can bestow except early and thorough education. But his countenance revealed traces of trouble and bitter disappointment, and crooked wrinkles furrowed his broad forehead, such as never had been swept by the slow fingers of envious time, while the black and burning orbs beneath revealed a deep and gloomy darkness mingled with their fire, like the shadow of an undying memory born of some irremediable sorrow.

A lovely little boy of seven summers sat near the corner of the table, devouring his piece of meat with as much apparent pleasure as if it had been actual ambrosia, fresh from a feast of the Olympian gods, while his happy visage and merry brown eyes contrasted strongly with the stern and careworn aspect of the parent.

On the opposite side of the board appeared a young girl about fifteen years of age, and never did that divine season of sweet virginity offer to mortal sight a more enchanting vision. There are some beings of such rare beauty, that no pen can describe their peculiar charms, because their loveliness has neither analogy nor likeness in the similitudes of common life, and so it was with the pioneer's daughter. Her form had already attained the full development of voluptuous womanhood, but nevertheless seemed still slight and child-like, from the ethereal grace of her motions and the perfect symmetry of her shape, so slender at the waist that you might almost clasp it with the measure of your two hands. Her face resembled a starry dream—the love-dream of a poet musing by the midnight sea, or kissed to sleep by the meridian moon on a bed of golden flowers; or rather, it was like an incarnate smile of sunbeams from the soul, if the purest essence of joy and innocence could only be embodied in radiant flesh and blood. Her eyes, large, chaste and sparkling, were of laughing blue, deeper than any dye of the ocean, or cerulean tints in the stainless vault of Heaven. In fine, she might have sat for the picture of summer—the delicious summer of the teeming south, living in light, wreathed with new-born roses, with red lips, suffused and warm with the juice of berries and bright blood of the grape, overflowing with health, happiness, and the nervous vitality of early youth.

As the coarse meal ended, a sharp and peevish cry of pain emanated from the back part of the cabin, and a woman, shivering in the cold paroxysm of fever and ague, rose from her pallet of buffalo skins on the floor, and reeled to a stool near the fire-place.

"Father," said the young girl, in a voice of affectionate entreaty, "why do you not get a doctor for mother? I am sure she grows worse every day."

"Leona," answered the man, in querulous tones, "can you inform me where I shall find the money to fee a physician?"

"Let him wait until you shall be able to pay him," suggested the daughter.

"Then he must open his books for credit to all eternity, for there is little prospect of my possessing any means this side of the general judgment," returned the father, with intense bitterness of accent and manner.

The sick mother interposed in words of touching tenderness, "My dear husband, do not be anxious on my account; the disease is not dangerous, and will wear out of itself in the course of a few weeks."

The patient kindness of his suffering companion moved that hardened man to tears, as he took down his gun, and remarked, in a mournful voice—

"I must be off on my day's hunt, or we shall have nothing to eat for supper." And he approached, and pressed his lips fondly to the pale brow of the wife, murmuring, as he departed—

"Mary, my love, do not give way to despair; if I have good luck to-day, I will go after the doctor in the morning."

"Stop, pa! Willie must have a kiss!" cried the intelligent boy, eagerly; and the loving father stooped down, and conferred the caress, as desired, when the beautiful Leona also claimed and received a similar boon.

Oh! home, celestial home of the world-weary, laboring heart, the asylum of the wandering soul, the only ark for the divine dove of hope, whose wild wings can find no green spot on the gloomy waters of life's swelling sea, thou art indeed the sole type and symbol of Heaven left on the earth, since the portals of paradise closed on our ruined race. Law, love and religion, every social and sacred institution, are cradled by the mild light of thy musical hearth-stones, ringing forever with the murmur of angel voices! To thee we owe the civilization which brings both song and science, for thou dost teach the power of authority, and the beauty of obedience, and all government is founded on thy lessons.

The previous history of this fallen man may be narrated in a few words. He had been a merchant of great wealth and respectability in western Missouri, until he entered into partnership with a false friend, who used the firm's name to obtain an enormous sum of money, with which, and all the other available funds, he absconded, and left his associate an utter bankrupt. Thus absolutely beggared, John Hallam, by the aid of a distant relation, managed to reach the wilds of Texas, where his sole means of subsistence, and that of his family, was the chase.

As he moved on over the green prairie, the face of the unhappy hunter gradually grew darker, until it looked awful as the angry gloom of a thunder-storm, and he muttered to himself, "I did wrong, foul wrong to my wife and children. I ought to have shot the base swindler like a wolf, and taken by force the plunder which he had acquired by cunning. But that would have been called robbery and murder! What then? Has he not wrested from me the strength and staff of life? Is not the beloved partner of my bosom now dying by inches? Is not my daily doom worse than the brief agonies of the most cruel crucifixion?"

With these and other even wilder ejaculations, the pioneer continued his course until he arrived at a small pine-log grocery on the banks of the Brazos, where the old San Antonia road crosses the river.

"I will enter," he said to himself in a mocking whisper, "and take one glass of the fool's fire-water, as the Camanches facetiously term it. I have heard that it has power to drive away sorrow, but if it can cure me, the devil himself needs not despair!"

Hallam approached the counter, and calling for brandy, poured out a tumbler almost full, and swallowed it at a draught. He then passed over the stream, and followed the trail into the prairie, where the game was said to be very abundant. But he had scarcely set his foot on this unfenced meadow of nature, gleaming with the most brilliant flowers, when an object arrested his attention with a feeling of strange fascination. He saw, on the distant verge of the blue horizon, a single horseman, apparently advancing along the road towards him, and a sudden impulse determined him to wait for the arrival of the stranger. Accordingly, he sat down on a bed of violets beneath an immense live oak, which stood alone in the field of radiant blossoms, and pondered, as was now his fixed habit, on the perished past.

At the instant a strong breeze sprung up, the wind sighed and sung mournfully through the evergreen branches above his head, and waved the long moss like the flowing hair of some gray-headed wizard, whispering unearthly spells. But the gloomy hunter in his profound abstraction heard it not—heard nothing but the sad voices of old memory, the funeral dirge of departed days—until the traveler had come within five paces of the spot where he reclined, when, raising his eyes, he uttered a horrible cry of mingled rage and astonishment, and springing to his feet, cocked and presented his rifle!

"Don't shoot, Hallam! for God's sake, don't shoot!" exclaimed the other, in accents of the greatest terror.

"Hugh Wheeler!" said the hunter, in a voice, clear, ringing, and dreadfully calm; "you made me a beggar, and for that, I must have your blood!"

"Holy Heaven! do you intend to murder me?" gasped the former partner, with lips white as those of a sheeted corpse.

"No," replied Hallam, in appalling tones; "if you have manhood enough in your felon's soul to fight me on equal terms; but nevertheless I must have your blood—blood for the beggary, that is the fair payment!"

"I will grant you the interview, as soon as we can find seconds," assented Wheeler, hoping to defer the immediate danger.

"Fool and coward!" thundered the infuriate hunter; "one of us two, or perhaps both, shall never leave this place alive! Dismount, or I will hurl you from your horse with a lump of lead!" And he took deliberate aim.

The other threw himself out of the saddle, and falling on his knees, implored wildly; "Oh! mercy! mercy! do not kill me! I am not fit to die!"

"Then get up, and battle for your craven life!" shouted Hallam.

"I have no weapons!"

"Liar and villain! there is a brace of pistols in your holsters!"

"I will make reparation for all the wrong that I have done you, but I cannot fight you!"

"Then hand me the sum of which you robbed me!"

"I cannot now, for I have not fifty dollars about my person."

"We will soon ascertain the fact," remarked the hunter, as he advanced to examine the bulky saddle-bags of his foe.

But the latter alarmed as much, or even more, for his money, than he had previously been for his life, resisted the intended search, crying fiercely, "you shall not touch my property; I will have you hung for highway robbery!"

"For murder, rather!" roared Hallam, as he seized the other by the throat, and dragged him to the ground.

Then, a brief, but terrible struggle ensued there, in that lonely prairie, with no witness, save the smiling sun, and the all-seeing eye of the omnipresent God! The enemies swayed to and fro, now in the air, and anon, on the earth; they rolled over and over, first one uppermost, and quickly the other, like two angry serpents in mortal coil. But the hunter never once broke his hold on the windpipe of his antagonist, and this iron, vice-like grip, soon decided the contest.

At length, Wheeler ceased to combat, and endeavored to call for mercy; but his purple lips only moved, and his voice died away in a hollow gurgle in the depths of his throat. Then, he lay still as a log, on the prairie; not a limb stirred, not a nerve trembled, and his eyes protruding from their orbits, awfully blood-shot, became fixed in that fearful, stony stare, which preaches with such appalling eloquence, the power of all-conquering Death!

The murderer, with a peal of horrible laughter, turned from his victim, to inspect the heavy saddle-bags, and uttered an exclamation of ferocious joy, that resembled the yell of some wild beast pouncing upon its prey, when he found them full of gold and bank bills.

"These are all mine!" he cried triumphantly. "I am again wealthy, and my family shall be happy; but where shall I hide this lifeless clod of clay?"

On glancing about, he perceived a small, round hollow in the prairie, which had been licked naked by the deer and buffalo for its saline particles. There, after arduous toil, he dug a shallow grave, with his large Bowie knife, and buried the corpse, with the bridle and saddle, having first turned the horse loose to join a herd of mustangs; and late in the afternoon, with the proceeds of his crime, he started for home. However, to avoid suspicion, he concealed a great part of his riches in the grove near his cabin, and entered, with his pockets full of gold, pretending that he had accidentally discovered the treasure in some remote situation.

By this plausible story, he succeeded in deceiving his credulous wife and daughter, for what will not the heart of love believe? But alas! he sought in vain to cover the frightful fact from the searching gaze, the sleepless scrutiny of his own unquiet conscience. When he rose, on the following morn, he saw in the air, about six feet before him, a shadowy form, like floating vapor, or impalpable mist, with a pair of sad, beseeching eyes, looking mournfully upon his face. He walked forth over the flowery green of the prairie, for several hundred yards, and the phantom retreated as he advanced, preserving the same relative distance, and wherever he turned, the dim cloud, with its sorrowful eyes, confronted him. He came to the conclusion, that it was the ghost of his assassinated victim; and the everlasting, unlaid horror, haunted him day and night.

Nevertheless, he determined to defy the awful spectre, and battle with it to the bitter end, as when it inhabited the body. He opened a fine farm, built elegant houses, bought cattle and slaves, and employed all his time in toil and activity, but ever the shape of moving mist haunted all his hours, and the pale eyes watched alike his labor and repose.

At last, the Revolution broke out, and shook Texas, as with the tread of an earthquake. Foremost in every gory battle-field, rushed the reckless, daring Captain Hallam, as if he courted death for his bloody bride; but still, wherever he flew, the form of floating vapor, and the unwinking eyes, flashed before him, and fought in his front.

The war was over, the lone star ascended to its bright place in the constellation of nations, and the haunted hero returned to the bosom of his family. But now the optical illusion slowly assumed a more dreadful appearance. The white cloud grew denser, and the eyes more life-like, until every limb of the body, every lineament of the visage stood revealed. There could no more be any doubt—it was the spirit of the murdered Hugh Wheeler!

By degrees, the phantom became fierce and menacing, and commenced diminishing the old distance between the dead and the living foe, at the rapid rate of a foot every day. Then the horror-stricken assassin could endure the agony no longer, but hurried to the nearest magistrate, and made a full confession.

Nevertheless, as the courts had not yet been organized in that section of the new Republic, and the justice of the peace deemed the homicide excusable, under all the circumstances of the powerful provocation, John Hallam escaped the punishment of human laws, but only to perish by a more awful doom. For each hour, the ghastly spectre drew nearer and nearer, until the skeleton mouth grinned within a dozen inches of his own. In a few minutes more, it would suffocate him with noisome kisses!

He fled away, as if for life, and plunging into the Brazos, committed suicide!

Philosophers, in their foolish dreams, say, that the age of phantoms has for ever past, and so indeed it has, so far as popular belief can take hold of the matter. But there still remains a mighty enchantress, an undying Witch of Endor, with spells to call back the ghosts of the dead to haunt individual minds! Conscience has a weird magic, which can evoke all the howling furies of unfathomable hell to torture the heart of blood-polluted guilt! Invisible to other eyes, the restless sinner sees them, ever more, if not in the sunny air, or gliding in the pale moonshine, or floating in the dim starlight, yet he beholds them in the viewless void of space, in the boundless abyss of immortal being beneath the throne of God. How wise, and yet how wonderful is this amazing mystery of Providence, who has stationed a faculty within every human bosom, to be, at once, the witness, recorder, counsel, judge, and avenger of the soul's most secret crimes—the Conscience!

AN UNSAFE STEP.

A SKETCH FOR BOTH YOUNG AND OLD.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Frederic, I would not do it. It is an unsafe step. You know not what the consequences may be."

Frederic Towne was an active member of an association, and had been entrusted by the members with a matter of some importance. A man of the name of Morgan had died a short time previously, and as he had been one of the most zealous and effective men of the organization, the brethren felt called upon to bear testimony, in some tangible manner, to their esteem for the departed. Morgan had left his family—a wife and two small children—with but little of this world's goods, and the friends resolved to give something that should be of assistance to the widow and her little ones; so they voted to present her with five hundred dollars. The money was drawn, and Frederic Towne was intrusted to carry it to her, together with a copy of the resolutions which were adopted on the occasion. On the morning after the receipt of the money Frederic went to the house where Mrs. Morgan resided, but he was informed that she had gone out of town, and would not return for a week. So he would have to keep the money for her until she came back.

Towne was an industrious tradesman, doing a small business, and it so happened that he was called upon to pay a note of four hundred and fifty dollars on the very day of his visit to the widow's house. When he went home to dinner he found the demand awaiting him.

"Ah—this is lucky," he said, as he read the missive which had been left for him. "Mrs. Morgan will not be back for a week, and I can use that money till then."

"Frederic," spoke his wife, "I would not do it. It is an unsafe step. You know not what the consequences may be."

"But they cannot be bad," returned the young man. "I must pay the note, and this money is lying idle in my pocket."

"You have no business to have it in your pocket," said his companion. "Go and lock it up. It is not yours. It was placed in your hands as a sacred trust, and you should not touch a penny of it. You should feel that you have no such money by you, if the thought of using it enters your mind."

"But where's the harm, Clara? I cannot raise this money handily to-day, and here I have it."

"That is the very reason why you should not touch the sum that has been placed in your hands. The simple fact that you cannot raise the money in any other way should warn you not to touch this. As for the note, you can get it renewed——"

"But I've had it renewed twice already, and I have not the face to ask the favor again."

"Then let it go. If you cannot raise the sum to meet it, you had better let the holder sue it than have your fair fame blasted."

"My fame blasted!" repeated Frederic, with a look of surprise.

"Aye. Suppose you use this money now, and should not be able to replace it when the widow returns? Think what a position it would place you in. Your associates would not trouble themselves to consider much upon the motives which led to your abuse of their confidence. They would judge you, as the world always judges, by your overt acts. They would simply see that they had placed money in your hands for the use of a poor widow, and that, instead of using it thus, you had appropriated it to yourself. And so it would stand against you."

"Pshaw! But I tell you I can raise it between now and then."

"Then go and raise it now."

"I cannot do that."

"Then do the next thing: have the note renewed."

"I tell you I cannot ask Mr. Johnson to do that again."

"Then let him sue it, and before it comes to trial you will have plenty of time to raise the money."

"But think of the idea of my being sued, Clara. It would hurt me in my business."

"Not so much as a solemn breach of trust would."

But Clara could not make her husband see it as she saw it. Like thousands of others, he was inclined to take the smoothest and easiest path which presented itself, without looking ahead to see whether it might lead him over a precipice, or bring him up in a dismal swamp. He felt too confident while the sun shone, and would not see that the storm might come upon him when he was least prepared for it.

And Frederic took four hundred and fifty dollars of the money which had been entrusted to his keeping, and paid his note. It was an unsafe step—a step which has ruined thousands! He meant no wrong—money could not have hired him to betray so sacred a trust—and yet he had laid himself liable to all the results of a most flagrant breach of trust. He had placed his character for honesty and truth upon the hazard of a die, and his whole future might take its tone and color from the cast. It was a very easy way to meet a present demand, and that other demand, which lay in the future, he would meet in good time.

Three days passed away without any uneasiness, but on the fourth day Frederic thought he would look around and do something towards raising the money against Mrs. Morgan should come home. He had only about fifty dollars of his own, and that he would have to use in his business; so he must raise the whole amount. He went to a few friends that day, but he could do nothing. None of them had any money to spare. On the following day he tried again, but with no better success. In short, money was very scarce, and hard to be got. And Frederic should have known this. He *did* know it, but when he used that money he had forgotten it; or, at least, he did not allow that knowledge to influence him.

Saturday came, and with it came Mrs. Morgan to her home. Frederic went out, but he could not borrow the sum he needed. He spent the whole day in running around, but such an amount as he wanted was not to be had on such paper as his simple note. There was money in the market, but it could be let on short time, and on better paper than his.

Towards night Mrs. Morgan entered his store. At any other time he would have been glad to see her, but now her presence tortured him. He knew she had been informed of the donation which had been set apart for her, and that she had come to get it. Perhaps she wanted to use some of it very much, and she had thus thrown herself in his way to give him an opportunity of paying it over. Yet she did not ask for it. She had not the assurance for that. Nor did she offer to buy anything. She spoke of the weather; and she said she had had a pleasant visit; and finally she turned to take her leave. She looked at the young shopkeeper as though she wished he would relieve her, but he could not. She went reluctantly away, and Frederic Towne bowed his head upon his desk and groaned aloud. Then he put on his hat and rushed into the street. He went to this man, and that man, but he could not raise the money.

Just as he was shutting up his day-book, preparatory to closing his place for the night, the president of the association came in.

"Ah—have you seen Mrs. Morgan, Fred?" he asked.

"Yes," stammered Frederic. "She dropped in here this evening."

"How did she seem to feel when you gave her the money?"

"I did not give it to her," the young man replied, trembling with terror and remorse. "I had left it at home," he added, not meaning to lie willingly, but forced thereto. "I suppose it will answer if I hand it to her on Monday."

"Yes—that will do; though I wish she could have had it to-night, as I am sure she is really in want."

A more miserable man than was Frederic Towne, as he started for home that night, could not be found. He dared not go into the Reading Room, where he was wont to meet his friends; nor dared he stop in any store. When he met a member of the association—and he met several of them—he tried to hide his face, for he felt guilty and ashamed. It seemed to him that everybody knew he was a traitor to his most solemn obligations, and he dared not meet the gaze of an honest man. When he reached his home he sank into a chair, and buried his face in his hands.

"Frederic," spoke his wife, "what is the matter?"

But he made her no reply. She moved her seat to his side, and placed one of her arms about his neck.

"What is it?" she continued.

He only groaned an answer.

"Has Mrs. Morgan returned?" she asked.

"Yes."

"And have you got the money for her!"

"Oh, my soul, no!"

"And can you not get it somewhere?"

The young man lifted his head, and caught his wife's hand.

"Clara," he cried, in piteous tones, "do not you add more to my misery. God knows I have suffered enough. I know you warned me of this, but I would not see it. I meant no wrong, and yet the wrong I have done; and my name is blasted—dishonored forever! I cannot raise the money—I have tried in every place."

"I feared it would be so," said the wife, solemnly. "That money was no more yours, for your own use, than would have been the same sum in your neighbor's drawer; and your own honor should have been the key to its keeping."

"I know it," groaned the unhappy man. "I see it now. But don't upbraid me. Oh! I know not how I shall meet my friends to-morrow. They will ask me how the widow received their kind gift. And how shall I meet them on Monday, when they must know that I have used the money!"

"But suppose you could, by some means, get this money?"

"Don't, Clara. It is impossible!"

"Not quite," returned the wife, winding her arms again about her husband's neck. "I, who had not the cares of business to distract my judgment, saw all this from the first. Or, at least, I feared it; and I resolved to prepare to meet it. I went to my mother, and told her all. I told her that she must help us—not only for my sake, but for your lasting good. I told her you would repay her as soon as you could. She had the money—it was nearly all her scanty store—and she let me have it; and I put it where the other sum should have been put in the first place. Now go down this very night, and discharge your obligation."

Frederic could hardly credit the story at first, but when the money was placed in his hands he believed it all. He could not say much then. But he put on his hat and hurried away. He found Mrs. Morgan in her little sitting-room, and in a few words made known his errand. He told her that he had not the money with him when she was in his store, or he should have handed it to her then. But she was too deeply touched with gratitude to think of the disappointment of the early evening. She blessed him with flowing tears—she blessed his generous companions—and she said her husband would surely bless them, if, from his heavenly sphere, he could behold this deed.

Frederic Towne returned to his home with a dreadful weight removed from his soul, and he was happy. He blessed his faithful wife for having saved him from present disgrace; but he blessed her more for the lesson he had received. From that hour he went forth upon the trust and duties of social life with a new and firm resolve. In after years he had many a temptation to make a temporary use of money entrusted to his keeping for specific purposes, but he would not do it. It was not his in any sense of the word, and his own honor was the safeguard which its proper owners had placed over it. He saw others fall into the snare, losing their good name and credit thereby; but he had too vivid a recollection of the hours of anguish he had once passed, while his character as a man hung suspended by a quivering hair of circumstance, ever to take again that UNSAFE STEP.

PICTURES OF A PARIS SUNDAY.

One of our contributors, who has been an eye witness of the character and influence of a holiday Sunday in most of the kingdoms of Europe, gives the following graphic sketch of a Paris Sunday. We would commend it to the consideration of those who plead for a lax observance of the sacred day, and to laboring men everywhere. Do we want *such* a Sunday in America?

"A Paris Sunday has become proverbial for its godlessness. Passing along its clean and beautiful streets, you find the cafes and restaurants crowded with men, taking their morning meal, and reading the newspapers of the day. Cries of fruit-dealers and street-venders are everywhere heard. Paviors, masons, roofers, painters—all kinds of mechanics are engaged in their usual avocations. Places of business are universally open till midday, as on other days. The whirl of cabs and omnibuses is even more constant than during the six days of the week. I had the curiosity to count the vehicles passing the Industrial Palace, Champs Elysees, mostly going to or returning from the Bois de Boulogne, in the afternoon of the second Sabbath in August—the grand fete day at Cherbourg—when Paris was emptied of the elite of its fashionable society, and found the average to be one hundred and forty a minute, or one thousand six hundred and eighty an hour. The grand waterworks at St. Cloud and Versailles play only on Sunday. As the day advances, the gardens of the Tuileries and Champs Elysees present a scene of unrivaled gaiety and folly. Bands of music execute lively military and operatic airs. Gaudy booths are surrounded with crowds of men, women and children, absorbed by childish sports. Automata, too silly for the amusement of infants, serve to delight other groups of soldiers and stragglers. Goat-carriages and whirligigs of wooden horses or mimic ships divert the children and nurses. As evening sets in, the out-door concert and drinking saloons flaunt their attractions; brilliant mirrors reflect the fanciful gas-jets; singing men and singing women, accompanied by orchestras below, amuse the multitude with comic, and sometimes immoral songs. Every conceivable device for drawing the people away from home and from God is employed. The Cirque de l'Imperatrice furnishes its equestrian attractions and its mirth-inspiring exhibitions. Adjacent public gardens are thronged with dancers. Operatic and theatrical amusements add their seductive performances. The whole line of the Boulevards is filled with people seated in front of the cafes, sipping their brandied coffee, playing dominoes, or gazing at the promenaders along the broad pavements. Houses and homes (if there be such a thing, without the name, in France) seem to be emptied into the streets and places of amusement, and the city is converted into a pandemonium of folly and of genteel or gross dissipation.

"Since the accession of the reigning dynasty, Sunday labor has been suspended on the public works in France; but I observed that the stupendous preparations for the Emperor's fete-day fireworks in the Place de Concorde, were in full progress on the second Sabbath in August, the fete occurring on the succeeding Sunday. But on Monday the Sunday workmen were not there—either because dissipation or over-exertion compelled a day of rest.

"Such is a Paris Sunday. In the light of reason, and of the Bible, and of eternity, how does it look? And what are its fruits? Are they not found in the thriftless condition of a vast *proletaire* population—living from hand to mouth—restless in spirit—ferocious in temper—kept from rebellion by a numerous soldiery, or quieted by government labor and food? May they not be seen in the dwarfed stature, and pallid aspect, and wretched inefficiency of the laboring classes, and in the "Blue-Monday" records of employers or of the magistracy—the Sunday dissipation disenabling thousands from Monday's occupations, or sending them to prison? Can they not be traced in the general declension of private, commercial, and political morals—whatever cover the refinement and high civilization of Parisian life may throw over the inconceivable iniquity of its social condition; in the loosening of conjugal bonds, the utter loss of a *home* day, and of all the restraints and joys of home life; in the prevalence of godlessness, irreligion and infidelity, and in the ascendency of civil and spiritual despotism?"

DIRGE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE

I.

There is a wailing in the trees,
A sobbing on the shadowed seas;
Even from the sod I hear a moan;
Even from the rocks I hear a groan
"*Alas! Alas!*"

II.

There is a shroud; there is a pall;
Light whispers in the crowded hall;
The mourners say, "She was so bright,
Thus taken from the golden light,
Alas! Alas!"

III.

Now there's a grave round which we stand
(With cypresses on every hand,
And amaranths of immortal bloom.)
Crying, "Oh thus we wreathe her tomb
Alas! Alas!"

IV

Ah! you may stand with wailings here
For Aveline with full many a tear,
But *I* who knew her so divine,
Can only sob by Death's dark shrine,
"*Alas! Alas!*"

THE MESTIZA GIRL'S REVENGE.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

The direct route from Caracas, the Capital of Venezuela, to the small village of Vanta Lucia, some forty miles distant, passes through a wild, gloomy defile of the mountains of Ocumare. This pass or defile was once the stronghold of a ferocious Indian bandit, named Cisneros, who became the terror of all the country round about the Capital, and who scrupled not to murder and plunder all with whom he came in contact. All alike became his victims, whether rich or poor, bond or free, old or young, male or female—or, if indeed he did spare any, it was to retain them as active members of his accursed band, or as prisoners upon whom to gratify the basest passions. For twenty years, in spite of every effort which the government made for his destruction, he managed to avoid arrest and retain his sway. At one time, a body of three hundred troops were sent against him, only one-tenth of whom ever returned to tell the horrible fate of their companions.

In the most gloomy and inaccessible part of the defile mentioned, there had, anterior to the time of Cisneros, been erected a church, where the surrounding peasantry were wont to meet, and the weary traveler to offer his devotions. Of this church, when in the zenith of his power, Cisneros took possession, and so fortified and garrisoned it as to render it almost impregnable; and here, during the later years of his life, he established his lawless headquarters, and went forth with his blood-thirsty band to the destruction of whomsoever had aroused his anger or excited his cupidity.

On one of his marauding excursions he stopped at the hut of a poor peasant; and finding within a comely youth and maiden, he saw proper to preserve their lives and carry them away prisoners. But this was no act of clemency on his part; for the youth was to be forced into his service and compelled to become a robber and a murderer, and the girl to be reserved for a purpose too shocking to name.

This girl, a meek, beautiful creature, named Juanita, for a time submitted to her cruel fate, without attempting resistance, retaliation, or escape; but at last, when, for resisting the advances of an officer of the band whom she loathed and contemned, she was subjected to the most revolting degradation of which the human mind has a conception, a terrible spirit of revenge was aroused in her bosom, and she swore in her heart that the author of her soul-blasting humiliation should die by her hand. The night following, she managed to get a few minutes private conversation with her brother.

"Antonio," she said to him, in the calm tone of desperation, "you see me living after what has passed, but only for a single purpose. I must have revenge—secret, speedy, terrible revenge—and the vile monster Hugo must be the first victim! If you can escape before the deed is accomplished, do so—for if detected, my crime will involve you in my destruction. If not detected myself, I will watch my opportunity and endeavor to escape also."

"I fear there is no escape for either of us, Juanita," sadly replied her brother; "but revenge is sweet, and death preferable to such a life as this; the saints, too, will pardon us; and so fear not, if opportunity presents, to let the heart's blood of any devil of the band."

"But Hugo first, Antonio!" replied Juanita, with compressed lips and flashing eyes.

"What is your plan, sister?"

"To find him alone, on the night it is his turn to stand guard, and bury his own dagger in his accursed heart."

"Your first hope will rest upon to-night, then," replied the brother; "for this very night he will have charge of the pickets."

"This is glorious news!" said Juanita, excitedly, at the same time crossing herself, looking upward, and seeming to utter a silent prayer. "No more, brother! and let us not be seen together. Hugo dies to-night, or Juanita sees not another sun!"

"Hush! there is some one coming!"

"Adios, then, and forget not to pray for my success!"

That night, while Cisneros and most of his band were wrapped in slumber, the small, delicate figure of a female stole through a postern gate into the great, dark, gloomy forest around. A few minutes later, as a tall, fierce-looking bandit was passing slowly along his lonely rounds, a low, silvery voice fell upon his ear, and pronounced the name of Hugo. He turned, and the next moment stood confronted with the pretty Juanita.

"Hugo," she said, in a voice as soft and gentle as the sighing of the balmy southern breeze, "I have offended you, and I could not rest under your displeasure. You have been cruel to me; but I forgive you, and in turn ask your forgiveness."

"So, my pretty Juanita," returned the astonished villain, "I have brought you to your senses, have I? But I forgive you, as you do me, and the future shall witness the happiness of both."

As he spoke he threw his right arm caressingly around her neck, and bent his lips to hers. It was the opportunity she sought; the handle of his sharp dirk was thus brought within her grasp; and quick as lightning she seized and drew it forth, and buried it to the hilt in his heart. So sudden was the act, and so fatal the blow, that Hugo had neither time to guard, nor life to shriek; but staggering a pace, he fell dead at the very feet of the brave girl whom he had so unforgivingly wronged.

Away like a spirit glided the light and airy form of Juanita, and none but the watchful Antonio knew that she had that night passed beyond the walls of the fortified church.

"It is done, brother," she whispered, as she glided past him in the dark, and sought her own rude pallet among the slumbering fiends, the vile minions of the redoubtable Cisneros.

The next day Hugo Solgado, the second in command of the banditti, was found dead, with his own dagger buried in his heart. That Hugo had committed suicide was the universal belief, and Juanita passed unsuspected of the crime. Two mornings later, another officer was found in the same horrible manner, his own dagger buried in his heart.

"By San Mateo!" cried the astonished Cisneros; "there is treachery here! and the murderer must be found!"

An investigation took place, but the murderer could not be found. The excitement of the affair had just begun to die out, when a third officer was found dead in the same mysterious manner.

Fearful was the excitement caused by this last discovery. What could it mean? Had these men, the bravest of the band and holding such enviable positions, become so weary of life as to throw it away in so disgraceful a manner? or was there a murderer among them—one daring enough and secret enough to do such deeds? or was it the work of some spirit fiend? for wicked and reckless as were these men, they were superstitious enough to believe in the presence of spirits both good and evil, and in the power of the evil to do more than human deeds. Great therefore was the excitement and commotion occasioned by these mysterious murders; and long and thorough was the investigation that sought to solve the bloody problem; and when it was found that no clue could be gained to the dark transaction, great fear fell upon all, from the bravest to the most cowardly, and each grew suspicious of every other, and every sentinel trembled on his lonely rounds as he thought of his dead companions.

Juanita, still unsuspected, remained to all appearance the same meek, quiet slave as before; and for a few weeks her vengeful hand was stayed, while she anxiously watched for an opportunity to strike one blow more and then make good her escape.

The opportunity so anxiously waited for came at last. An expedition was planned against a neighboring rancho, and most of the band were called upon to accompany their leader. Among the few that remained behind was the fourth officer, whom Juanita so bitterly hated, and whose life she was now resolved to take in the same manner as that of the others.

There was but one drawback to her hopes. Antonio, her brother, would be compelled to accompany Cisneros, and therefore could not escape with her; but during the few stolen moments she had with him prior to his departure, he seriously urged her to take care of herself without regard to him; adding that, if she were once away, he doubted not he might soon find means to slip through the robbers' hands and join her. With a hurried and trembling adieu the two separated, and an hour later Antonio marched out through the western pass, under the leadership of the invincible Cisneros.

For an hour or two after their departure, Juanita moved quietly around among the few that remained, exchanging a cheerful and pleasant word with each, and thus fortifying herself against suspicion. Then retiring to her pallet, ostensibly to sleep, she passed the greater portion of the night in praying for her own success and her brother's ultimate deliverance from the hands of his enemies.

At last, believing the proper hour had come for the execution of her plan, she quietly arose, stole softly from among the sleeping brigands, glided through the postern gate, and silently and speedily made her way to the eastern outlet of the pass, where, as she expected, she found on duty the officer she sought.

With him as with her previous victims, she entered into conversation, and led him to believe he was the favorite object of her secret love. In this manner she managed to withdraw him from his duty; and he actually conducted her past the sentinels far down the glen; when, watching her opportunity, as she had hitherto done, she whipped out his dagger, and plunged it into his heart.

There was nothing now to prevent her escape; it yet wanted an hour or two of day, and the officer would probably not be sought for till the morning should be well advanced; and knowing that it would surely be death for her to return—as she had been seen in company with her victim, whose murder would not only be proved upon her, but all the others accounted for—she fled along the deep, wild pass, with the swift, light bound of the startled deer, expecting to be beyond the reach of her enemies ere the morning sun should reveal which way her steps had been taken.

Thus she fled swiftly along, till the dull gray of morning began to light up the gloomy scene; when, as she was about to turn the sharp angle of a huge rock, low voices, and the dull, gloomy tread of many feet, fell upon her startled ear.

She comprehended all in a moment. The band were returning from their lawless expedition by a different route from that by which they had departed. There was a copse of cactus close beside her; and she had just time to secrete herself therein, when the head of the file appeared and wound slowly along within a few feet of her, some eight or ten of the party bearing litters, on one of which was stretched a dead body, cold and stiff, and on the other a man writhing in mortal agony.

From some cause, Juanita felt her heart sink within her; a chilling gloom came over her spirit—a horrible suspicion flashed across her mind; and slightly parting the bushes, and eagerly straining her eyes forward, she saw enough in the dim light to confirm her worst fears. Her brother, her dearly beloved brother Antonio, for whom she would gladly have sacrificed her own existence, lay a cold and ghastly corpse before her.

The shock was too great for her self-control and presence of mind; she had borne much, but this she could not bear and restrain her feelings; and uttering a wild, piercing shriek, she plunged forward, and fell fainting on the ground by the dead body.

As a natural consequence, her apparition caused great excitement among the band; and by the orders of Cisneros, she was at once seized and roughly bound—for that she was endeavoring to escape, her presence there was a sufficient proof. On her return to consciousness she was sharply questioned, but knowing that her fate was sealed, and that her answers could avail her nothing, the brave girl resolutely kept silent, and even the blows bestowed upon her wrung from her no confession. With thongs they bound her to the litter which bore the dead body of her brother, and thus compelled her to walk back by his side, at the same time informing her that a worse fate than his should soon be hers for daring to escape.

Before entering within the pickets of the eastern pass, the last victim of Juanita was discovered, with his own dagger still in his heart; and then the fearful truth flashed upon the robbers, that she was the murderer, not only of him, but of the three which had preceded him.

On discovering this, the rage of Cisneros and his band became truly fiendish; and no sooner had they got back to the rendezvous, than their whole attention was turned to the torture of the helpless girl.

We will not shock the ears of our readers with a narration of the barbarities exercised upon poor Juanita. Suffice it to say, that all that devilish ingenuity could invent to give her pain and suffering, was carried into effect; and when, at last, death came to her relief, her mutilated body was cast forth to be devoured by wild beasts.

This unfortunate girl had another brother called Isidoro, who served many years in the capacity of a guide to travelers journeying to and fro between Caracas and the towns and villages round about; and some years subsequent to the tragic events we have recorded, and the destruction of Cisneros and his band, he sat beneath the ruins of this fortified church, which had been destroyed by government troops in their last and unsuccessful attempt to take the noted robbers, and with sobs and sighs related to a friend of ours the painful story of the capture, deeds and sufferings of his beloved sister Juanita, adding, with the superstitious faith of the Spanish Indian:

"And still, though dead, Senor, her troubled spirit does not rest, but roams about the gloomy glen here, in the dead hours of night, and frightens travelers with her horrid tale. I have seen her, sir, and heard her speak, and my blood has curdled at the tale her fleshless lips have told to me, as I to you. Long since, Senor, I collected her bones and gave them Christian burial, and have spent much money for the rest of her soul; but still, alas! she walks and talks, and will rest only in God's own good time!"

THE IGUANA.

BY AN OLD TRAVELER

This is the most horrid-looking animal I ever saw. It is even frightful, and its form, motions and nature are repulsive in every respect, and yet it is excellent eating. When I saw it alive I always felt disgusted, and sometimes afraid; but whenever I tasted its meat, in whatever manner it was cooked or served up, I gave it the preference over almost every other dish.

We used to shoot them, while I was in South America, whenever we found them, and sometimes we caught them alive. We undertook to tame two of them, but they took to fighting, and there was no stopping them. What was very surprising, although, when exhausted by a long and violent battle, they would sometimes appear entirely satisfied and peaceable, so as to lie quietly down and have a good sleep; they would begin to fight again when they woke, and in as savage a spirit as before. They never give over fighting, as we were assured, until one is actually killed. And so we found it in the case we tried. They fought and slept, then fought and slept again, then woke and fought, until finally one was killed.

The reason why iguanas are such disagreeable objects is not their form alone, which is hideous, but the peculiar color of the scales which cover them give it the appearance of a mass of animal matter in a state of putrefaction. This may be in part imagined from the description of it, given by Cuvier, who says that it is yellowish green above, marbled with pure green; the tail marked with rings of brown, and other colors. The form may be conceived of from the remaining part of the scientific description: The body and tail are covered with small scales; a range of spines, like spikes, extending along the whole length of the back; something like a cow's dewlap under the throat, the edge of which is supported by a bone; a number of lumps are on the thighs, like swellings caused by disease, and full of pores, such as are found on lizards; and the head covered with hard plates. Each jaw has a close set of three-cornered teeth all round; and there are two small rows of teeth of the same shape on the back part of the palate. It is from four to five feet in length.

The iguana looks so unlike any common animal, that I think any stranger, meeting one unexpectedly, would involuntarily run away with dread and disgust.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CONSTANT READER.—You had better attend school at some good academy for two or three years, study hard, and keep your mind conversant with business operations, and then go into active business. Should you go through college, you would be rather too old to commence working your way in the business world, and would have acquired habits unfavorable to such a course. At any rate, you had better not go to Europe to get your education. A man should always be educated, if possible, in the country in which he is to earn his living or fight his battle of life.

M. G.—You did right in not speaking to the girls after the shabby trick they played on you. You should refuse to recognize them in any way, until they make the most ample apology for the wanton insult put upon you, and even then you should be careful about reposing confidence in them. Perhaps your best course would be to avoid them altogether.

W. J. D.—Wants to know if he takes a bill on a bank whose notes are quoted at par by a "bank-note reporter," and finds that the bank is broken or worthless, if he can make the publisher of the "bank-note reporter" take the bill of him at par, or (in case of his refusing so to take it) sue him and recover damages. Not by any means. You will, in such a case, have to lose the bill out and out.

G. M. F.—Washington was a British subject before the Declaration of Independence was passed by the Continental Congress. That document dissolved the political and governmental bonds which had bound the Colonies and Great Britain together. From that time the former, instead of being dependent Colonies were independent States, and the inhabitants thereof ceased to be *British subjects* and became and remained *American Citizens*. In order to become informed on the current topics of the day, you should read, in addition to the LEDGER, one or more good daily newspapers.

PUSSY.—We are pleased that such a little girl as you should take the trouble to inquire of us concerning things you wish to understand. Your letter is exceedingly well written, too, for such a "little puss." As to the meaning of "poetic diction" we don't know as we can enable you to understand it, but we will try to explain it. *Diction* means, *the manner of expressing our ideas in words.* In poetry, writers use more flowing, swelling, and lofty words and phrases than in prose; the *thoughts* are also grander and more thrilling. For example: in prose one would say, "The night set in, and a star shone in the sky." A poet would say, and *has* said,

"Night drew her sable curtain round
And pinned it with a star."

You will of course see and feel how unspeakably more grand and beautiful the *last* or *poetic* way of stating the fact is than the *first* or *prose* way. Again: in prose one would say, "The sun is setting in great splendor." The "*poetic diction*" with which the same idea would be expressed might be, "The god of day his golden mantle trails adown the western sky." We hope this explanation, and the examples we have given, will enable you to understand what is meant by "poetic diction."

GEORGE F.—You are right on the point referred to. A parricide is one who murders his father, or any one to whom he owes reverence, or who kills his son or daughter over seven years of age, or who invades or wars against his native land. A matricide is one who kills his mother; a fratricide, one who kills his brother; a homicide, one who kills any human being, though most generally one who kills a person not of his own family. Suicide is self-murder, and a suicide is one who kills himself. A regicide is one who kills a king, queen, or other reigning monarch. Infanticide is the killing of infants, and fœticide (pronounced *feticide*) is the destroying of the life of a child unborn. As we stated in our last issue, the murderer of a sister would be styled a sororicide, from the Latin *soror*, sister. The word is accented on the second syllable, thus—so-*ror*-icide. It is seldom used, because the crime itself is very unfrequent.

A. B. C. Z.—Complains that country people, forgetting their obligations to merchants, who keep on hand heavy goods, on which small profits are made, patronize peddlers who sell only light articles which yield a handsome profit; and wants us to rebuke said people for their "ingratitude" to resident merchants. In response to this, we would ask our correspondent, if merchants "keep store" for the benefit and accommodation of others or for their own profit and advantage? The seller sells for his own benefit, and the buyer buys for his; and there should be no restrictions upon either so long as they trafic in legitimate articles of trade. The question of gratitude or ingratitude is not involved in a business which is pursued solely for gain.

ALEXANDER.—Your teacher is mistaken in regard to the character and capacity of Alexander the Great. He was not "an ignorant barbarian." He was a man of extraordinary cultivation and refinement, and the favorite pupil of Aristotle. In his days human life was not so sacredly regarded as it is now; and the conqueror who destroyed an army or a city, or laid waste an empire, was looked upon as a hero of the first grade. And in fact, the same ideas prevailed long after Alexander's time, as witness the wars of Napoleon, the British conquest of India, the burning of Washington by the British during the war of 1812, and other warlike acts of the greatest commanders of the greatest nations.

S. P. Q. R.—Asks, "To whom does Lord Byron refer in the lines:

'When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to heaven in her appeal to man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod—
The wrath—the delegated voice of God
Which shook the nations through his lips—and blazed
Till vanquished nations trembled as they praised.'"

He refers to Sheridan, who made the celebrated speech, known as the "Begum speech" against Lord Hastings, the oppressor of India.

A. G.—You should never excite the opposition of a man who has it in his power to thwart your wishes. The idea of your getting into a controversy with the judge who was to decide your motion in reference to a matter which rested entirely in his discretion, was utterly absurd. You should have known better after you had been one day in a lawyer's office as a student. Lay the lesson to heart, and your defeat in the present case may be fruitful of victories in the future

JAMESTON.—You may be right, but the chances are at least five to one in favor of your rival. A man who purposely wounds a woman's self-love in the presence of another, stands but little chance to win her hand, unless she takes a notion to marry him for purposes of revenge. Should you succeed in the case you mention, you will stand a chance to be mercilessly hen-pecked all your wedded days. You had better turn your attention elsewhere.

CHANTICLEER.—Your argument runs very much like "The House that Jack built," but it is a good one, nevertheless. You have, however, misconceived the objects for which the LEDGER is published. It is no part of our scheme to discuss theological or political questions. There are papers enough devoted to such subjects, in which you can get a hearing. The LEDGER is a family paper, not a political or polemical one.

SADISBURY.—We do not know what good it would do you to study the "British Peerage," as you call it, and learn the genealogies of all the titled families of that realm. Pursued as an amusement, and as a substitute for some other recreation, it might be serviceable, but not as a serious business.

W. F.—You are mistaken in supposing that the "character" of your verses "will atone for their defects in rhythm." Nothing will atone for rhythmical defects in poetry, any more than for bad legs, or no legs at all, in horses. Pegasis must not be splay-footed.

B. D.—Your teacher is mistaken. The hippopotamus and rhinoceros are not carnivorous animals; although they often kill and mangle other beasts, they never feed on them, except that the hippopotamus sometimes diets on fish.

HOGARTH.—By addressing a letter to Peter Cooper, Esq., of this city, you can gain all the information you desire in regard to the Cooper Institute, and "The School of Design for Women" established therein.

ANNIE.—If a young man, on being introduced to you, should extend his hand for a greeting, there would be no impropriety in your taking it; on the contrary, it would be a very ungracious act to refuse to do so.

DOMBEY.—All your arguments in justification of suicide are fallacious. The fact is, it cannot be justified. Your supposed cases of people exposed to imminent and unescapable danger of being killed by wild beasts, of a man's being condemned to the stake, or death by some other terrible torture, of a man's being encircled by the crushing folds of a boa constrictor, and all the rest of your suppositious cases, do not furnish one that would be an excuse for suicide. Were men permitted to decide when they are unendurably annoyed or tortured, and then allowed, on such decision, to kill themselves, suicide would be justified in every case. A few years since, a French officer, who had fought the Arabs and lions in Algeria, and stood with an undaunted heart before such perils as you have supposed, on returning to Paris, could not stand the fleas which he encountered in every lodging house, and in a fit of despair occasioned by these little tormentors, he blew his brains out. He could stand Arabs, lions, little snakes and big snakes, but fleas he could not endure; and being a disciple of your school, he committed suicide to escape what he decided to be an unendurable and unescapable nuisance. And were your ethics to become common, suicides would become as frequent as defalcations.

WILLIAM.—We cannot say from our own knowledge that a boa constrictor or anaconda ever swallowed an ox or a horse, but we have read of their doing such things, and do not disbelieve the reports to that effect. You must take into consideration the fact that when a boa or anaconda has squeezed an animal to death, and broken every bone in its body, and mashed the carcass to a pulpy mass, that the horse, ox, or whatever it be, has not more than half the bulk it had while living, and that it can be compressed like putty, or any other soft substance. When you remember all these facts, and then also remember that a common snake will swallow a frog or toad four times its own diameter, you will have no difficulty in believing that an anaconda or boa can swallow an ox or a horse.

COUNTRY SUBSCRIBER.—You must not suppose that one citizen of New York knows nearly every other inhabitant, the same as in your village. A man here seldom knows his next-door neighbors. People have been known to live in adjoining houses in this city for ten years or more, without becoming acquainted or even so much as once speaking to each other. You must not be surprised, therefore, when we tell you that we have not the pleasure of your cousin's acquaintance, and never heard of her being in the city of New York until we read your letter. You can get the back numbers of the LEDGER you ask for, and can obtain them of us by mail, or order them through any newsdealer.

ALBERT.—Your statement of the problem is quite different from that recently given by "Bancroft." He said the $60 was to be given one-third to A, one-fourth to B, one-fifth to C, and one-sixth to D; your statement is that the money was to be divded among A, B, C, and D *in the proportion* of one-third, one-fourth, and so on, which is quite a different thing. As you state it, the problem can be worked, and your solution of it is correct. We have received similar explanations and solutions from a great many other correspondents; and this answer is made for the benefit of all who have written to us on the subject.

C. L. P.—Your merit, or rather the merit of your story, is just about equal to your modesty. A writer who begins by boasting that he can write a better story than Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., and a better sketch or paragraph than Fanny Fern, must have exhausted nature of all her brass in the region where he was produced. It may be that, as you say, your writings will be read long after those of Mr. Cobb and Fanny Fern are forgotten; we are quite certain that they will not be read *till then.* We do not return rejected manuscripts.

PEDRO.—You can get a divorce in Indiana for almost anything, or even for nothing, if you will swear to the right kind of affidavits. But you must make haste, as the next legislature of that State will probably restore the laws which govern questions of divorce in other civilized countries. In regard to this matter, Indiana has for some years been among the "outside barbarians."

ALMANZOR.—The Moors held Spain, or a great portion of it, for several hundred years. The name of the Moorish commander who first landed on the Spanish shores was Taric. He was called Taric el Tuerto, that is, Taric the one-eyed, he being blind of one eye. He was a formidable old chieftain; and after he once got a foothold the Spaniards could not drive him back.

GALENA.—You should take an interest in the "baby clothes," and when your wife holds up a tiny garment for your admiration *you should admire it,* and by your conduct make her feel happy and buoyant, instead of fretting and grumbling, and thereby occasioning her much discomfort and unhappiness. Husbands are apt to be too gruff and unsympathetic with their wives.

SUPERNUMERARY.—Do not allow the insults of the party referred to to drive you from the very sensible course you had marked out. Keep your temper, and rest assured that he who does what he conscientiously believes to be right, and minds his own business inflexibly, will be certain to triumph at last over all the impertinent fops and snobs that may cross his path.

PINE HOLLOW.—It would be an unusual thing for a young man who has no sisters or female relatives living with him, to invite girls to come and see him at his house. He might with propriety write to a young lady of his acquaintance and beg the favor of a reply; but to request her "to write to him," in a general way, might give offense.

OLD HICKORY.—It was all very well for Old Hickory himself to play his desperate games; but should you attempt to imitate him, you will probably find that you and General Jackson were not made of the same material nor of the same pattern. There is a great difference between hickory and basswood.

A CONSTANT SUBSCRIBER.—In speaking of two young ladies of the same family, it is proper to say, "The Misses Smith." In sending cards of invitation, it is always best to direct to every person individually, and not lump two or more together.

C. F.—You cannot "get the modes of conducting our elections and other State affairs, and learn the legality of this and that" in a condensed form. To acquire such information you must study the Revised Statutes and all the laws of the State.

H. W.—It may be that the lady leaves all her visitors to find their way to the front door alone when taking leave of her. If you are the only one whom she thus lets alone, you might very properly take offense thereat, and cease your visits.

S. O.—If the young lady will not give up the daguerreotype we suppose you will have to let her keep it, as it is not probable that you would bring a suit against her to recover possession of it. An obstinate girl is a troublesome creature to manage.

HUMBUG.—You should not have trusted to your friend's representations concerning the horses. It is said, among the knowing ones, that the best man in the world would cheat his own mother in a horse trade "without being conscious that he had strayed from the path of rectitude."

LOVER.—Go ahead. Remember the old adage—"Faint heart never won fair lady." No doubt the girl loves you as ardently as you do her; but of course she will never let you see that she loves you until you have "declared your intentions."

RILLA.—It would be improper for you to invite a man to call on you who, for any cause, is not on speaking terms with your mother. His misunderstanding, or quarrel, or enmity with or to her should be set right *first,* and then you could with propriety ask him to call at your house.

M. V. N.—If a man, when standing on a ball-room floor waiting for the dance to begin, should put his arm around his partner's waist, she should tell him to take it away—unless she prefers to have him keep it there.

F. D.—We do not intend to make a gazetteer of the LEDGER, and must therefore decline acceding to your request that we should publish the names, prices and character of all the literary papers in the country.

LESSA.—Bright crimson, or orange dresses, are not proper for the street. They make a woman look like an opera dancer or a circus rider when worn abroad, but in the house they are very becoming to some ladies.

FELIX A.—We cannot tell the present population of New York city, as it is some time since the last census was taken It is supposed, by those who have the best means of knowing, to be about eight hundred thousand.

C. D.—Not generally. Most of the best quality of hemp used in the manufacture of rope and cordage comes from Russia. It is imported undressed, in bales.

SISTER.—Go on as you have begun. If your brother has any heart or soul at all, your sisterly kindness and affection will win him back to a sense of decency.

CHARLEY.—We "have no opinion" of the habit of smoking. Physicians have determined that the use of tobacco is, to a greater or less degree, deleterious.

GALLO.—It would be proper for you to send the LEDGER to the young lady for a year. Be particular in sending us her address, so there may be no mistake.

O. O. O.—You are not responsible for the loss of the money that your friend entrusted with you, unless he can prove that you lost it by your own fault.

HILDA.—We don't think that a young lady is bound to marry a man who threatens to blow his brains out if she does not wed him.

KENTUCKY.—The back numbers of the LEDGER containing the story you mention, and including the present number, will cost $1,88. You can order them of us.

P. P.—Address your letter—James Buchanan, President of the United States, Washington, D. C.

JAMES L. P.—We have not space to spare for an account and description of type-making.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*